

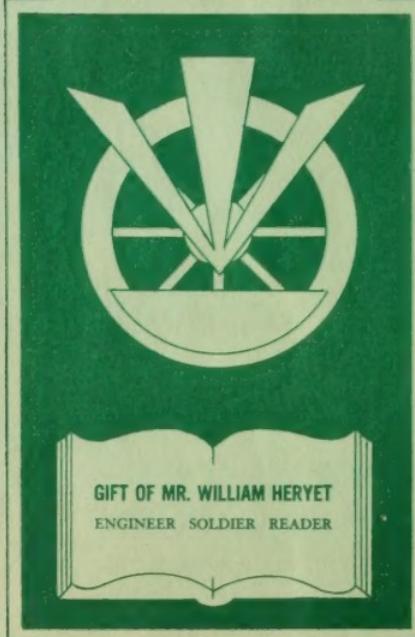


A CENTURY OF
OUR SEA STORY



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Born 1871 in Wales, served in the Himalayas with the British Transport Corps and in the Boxer Rebellion, helped construct the C.P.R., fought with the Canadian Expeditionary Force 1914-17, a resident of Vancouver for forty years, still a reader at 94, donated his collection of 4,000 books in 1965.

40



Walker C Cockerell, ph. sc.

Lord Nelson
from a drawing in the National Portrait Gallery
made in 1802 by H. Edridge, A.R.A.

A CENTURY OF OUR SEA STORY

BY

WALTER JEFFERY

AUTHOR OF "THE KING'S YARD," ETC.

WITH A PORTRAIT OF LORD NELSON

LONDON

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET

1900

P R E F A C E

THIS book is an attempt to compress into one volume a very large subject, and must, of necessity, be only an outline-sketch of a century of our sea story. A practical knowledge of the sea, considerable acquaintance with ships, sailors, and seaports, a good library, and twenty years' study of sea literature, are the qualifications I possess to write upon the subject. I ask readers to accept these things, as in some measure, a set-off against the faults I am well aware the book must have. I think it fair to myself to state, that although this volume treats of a well-worn subject, there is much new matter in it, at all events much that is new so far as modern books are concerned. In certain of the chapters, such as that on Naval War and that on Exploration, it was essential for the completeness of the work to write them; but the subjects have been so often and so well treated that I have seen no other way of dealing with them, than to make the chapters a summary of the century's annals. In other chapters, such as those on sea customs and the sea language, and that on the story of the south seas, I think most of the matter will be new to book readers. All through this work I have shaped a course for myself, and where I have dredged in the same waters as others, I have done so consciously, but only so far as was necessary in the process of crossing their tracks.

W. J.

SYDNEY, September 1900.

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A CENTURY OF OUR SEA STORY

CHAPTER I

SHIPS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE CENTURY

The Royal Navy and its Armament—The Merchant Service.

A COMPANY of King Alfred's archers in a war galley, and a torpedo gun-boat and her crew, are not more unlike than the navy of what has been aptly called "eighteen hundred and wartime," and the navy of to-day. Yet so close to us is this "bow and arrow" period of our naval service, that Provo Wallis, who brought the *Shannon* out of action in 1813, died an Admiral of the Fleet in 1892. Born in 1791, he joined the *Cleopatra* in 1804, when some of the men of Anson's squadron were still living. Here is a suggestion of service links in a chain, stretching from 1900 down to the twilight of English Royal Naval History, when the ships of the Cinque Ports were the war navy on which Englishmen placed their chief dependence.

To picture to oneself the ships, the seamen, how they lived, and fought, and died—the sea-life as it was before the peace, as it was, in fact, for a hundred years before, and for a generation in this century—I know no better reading than the *Naval Chronicle*. Not those parts of it printed in big type, biographies of naval heroes, de-

scriptions of sea-fights, and the like, which have all been reprinted often enough in modern books, but the insignificant little paragraphs that tell of what one may call the domestic history of ships and seamen. The first number of the magazine was printed in January 1799, when folks were still talking of "Rear-Admiral Sir Horatio Nelson's engagement of the Nile." They fired salutes and used much oil in illumination when the news reached England, but even the young people were hardly so enthusiastic as we are on these occasions now—there was much more talk over the taking of Khartoum—but then such rejoicings were not novelties. Since the Peace of Ryswick in 1697, no child had grown to man's estate without more than once seeing some ceremony of the kind, for in a hundred years England, during more than half the period, had been at war.

What the ships in the first half of the century were like, and the story of the changes in shipbuilding, will, I hope, unfold itself as this book proceeds, without much quoting of tonnage and dimension figures. The Englishmen who every summer visit Portsmouth, and from the deck where Nelson fell, look around them at the modern war-vessels anchored near the *Victory*, can take in at a glance most of what it would require many pages to express in print. If the form of expression may be permitted, Nelson's *Victory*, launched in 1765, still afloat and an Admiral's flagship, in her name personifies the navy of two past centuries, and remains a living comparison with the ships of the beginning of a third.

On the night of October 4th, 1744, the *Victory*, Sir John Balchen's flagship, and the finest and largest ship

of her time, was lost off the Caskets. If a man who had never looked at pictures, or heard, or read of what has happened in the last hundred years, were shown Nelson's *Victory* and the modern battle-ship *Implacable*, his mind could no more take in the idea that both were ships, than he could be made to understand that a big water-boiler on wheels was the successor to a team of coach-horses. Yet between Balchen's *Victory* and Nelson's, the eye of a shipwright or a sailor is needed to find a difference ; between Balchen's *Victory* and the men-of-war of a century still earlier, the difference is still only great in the eyes of experts ; between Nelson's *Victory* and the ships that many men still at sea first sailed in, the contrast is scarcely greater.

In 1802 *Le Commerce de Marseilles* was broken up, and she was then the largest ship in the King's service. Hood brought her out of Toulon in 1793, and sailed her to Portsmouth, but the docks there were not large enough to accommodate her, and so she was sent to Plymouth, where she was used as a prison ship. Her greatest length was 211 ft. 7 in., but figures express little. If she were afloat and converted into a coal hulk, three like her could lie ahead of each other alongside the latest White Star steamer, the *Oceanic*, of 704 ft., and the liner would overlap by nearly 70 ft., more than the length of the first British passenger steamer. The displacement of *Le Commerce de Marseilles* was 2800 tons, far ahead of anything then afloat or until the thirties. The displacement of the *Implacable* is 15,000 tons, that of the *Oceanic* 28,500 tons.

The navy at the beginning of the century counted 11 battleships, mounting from 100 to 112 guns. The thirty-two pounder was the standard weapon, a few

forty-twos existed, and sixty-eight pounders were cast, but this was a rare gun, seldom seen on ship board. The carronade, a short range gun throwing a heavy shot for its size, had since 1797 been largely used on poop and forecastle in place of the nine-pounder which a century before had displaced the Falcons, Sakers, and Minions, names old-fashioned, though not strange in the ears of sailors a hundred years ago, but familiar to us only as ancient history. For a forty-two, 14 lbs. of powder was a charge, and 10 lbs. 11 oz. for a thirty-two, and men handled such quantities of gunpowder with more care than is apparent in the modern gunner's ways with a fifty-pounds weight cartridge of "cocoa" powder.

A distinguished authority writing on ships and their armaments in 1800 shows us what he thought was the limit of possibility in these things. Mr R. Willett wrote :—

"The size of our ships seems now to have reached nearly its ultimatum ; for nature herself, in some measure, fixes its limits. It is man who is to navigate and manage them, and unless our bodily strength could be increased likewise, every manœuvre on board them must be conducted with difficulty and delay. For though the mechanic powers are almost boundless, the application of them, for the purposes of navigation, is more confined. The cordage, when made larger, will be rendered difficult to pass through the pulleys, and so large, at last, as not to pass at all. Timber, the growth of nature, as much as man, cannot be made to grow larger, and the very element (in harbours at least) in which they are to navigate, have only certain depths, that cannot be increased. And let it be remembered, as a certain axiom in mechanics, that what we gain in power we must be contented to lose in time. Every operation on board will therefore become laborious, dilatory, and even uncertain. The French, indeed, have latterly built a ship of most extraordinary size, 172 ft. keel for tonnage, by 55 ft. 9 in. by the beam, tonnage about 2850 tons, but

she is pronounced to be entirely unfit for service, and hath never been out of harbour ; and the Spaniards are said (and that by such a respectable authority as that of the Marquis Del Campo) to have built one still larger ; but the Spaniards, on sending this unwieldy monster to sea, found that she must have been lost, if they had not had the precaution to send out two other ships with her, which towed and brought her back again."

The propelling power of ships, that is the sails, the area of them, and the method of setting the canvas and handling it generally, was the same at the beginning of the century as it had been a hundred years earlier, and as it remained for all practical purposes to within a generation of the present. Anchors and cables, steering gear, running and standing rigging, in the time of Anson, were the same things in the time of Nelson, and officers still holding Queen Victoria's commission would find no difficulty in handling the warships of Queen Anne.

If a landsman looks at a model or a picture of a battleship of the forties of this century, and of the time of Anson, he can take in at a glance the changes. Beak-head bows, and heavy stern galleries in tiers, sometimes of three one above another, the lateen mizzen, the high poop with big lanterns in which a man could stand upright, a towering forecastle and a bowsprit with the sprit-mast erected upon it, these are the readiest ways of identifying the ships of the earlier period. In the present century the stern was rounded, and small stern-walks took the place of the heavy galleries, the bows were lightened, and the beak-head removed ; the spanker-boom and gaff came in, and the lateen sail went out ; and the sprit-topsail disappeared from the bowsprit, leaving only the sprit-sail yard in its

place. The jack-staff on the bows of steamers remains to-day a last link, with the picturesque sprit-mast and its rigging. In those days they painted warships black outside and blood-red inside. Nelson introduced the coloured streak, and in 1805 painted the *Victory* black with yellow streaks round her, and in that year she was painted inside a dull green and red; now she is the regulation white inside, and black and white outside.

In addition to 11 first rates, there were in the service at the close of the century, 24 second rates mounting from 98 guns to 84 guns, 150 third rates mounting from 80 to 64 guns, 28 fourth rates mounting from 60 guns to 50 guns, 150 fifth rates mounting from 50 to 32 guns, and 72 sixth rates mounting from 30 to 20 guns. Besides these rated vessels there were 190 vessels mounting from 18 guns to 6 guns not rated, 10 yachts, 72 hired armed vessels, 15 luggers, and 38 revenue cutters. Among the yachts was the *William and Mary*, 8 guns, built at Blackwall in 1694, the oldest vessel in the navy. Altogether, then, there were on the *Navy List* at the beginning of this century, 435 rated ships, and 325 vessels not rated—more than 700 ships.

Our present *Navy List* only shows about 550 ships. No wonder when the peace came there were so many unemployed seamen, for within a few months after the conclusion of the war only 160 ships were left in commission.

A first rate of the old navy, not counting the poop and forecastle, had five decks, though she was technically a "three-decker," because her main armament was carried upon three decks only. These were the batteries

from which a broadside of from 1700 to 2030 lbs. could be fired. I have by me Sir Home Popham's books of *Instructions*, etc., published in 1805, *Regulations and Instructions relating to His Majesty's Service at Sea*, 1796, and many similar works dating from the eighties of last century, and comparing these with Mile's *Epitome of the Royal Navy*, published in 1841, and with a personal knowledge from the early seventies, it is remarkable how in their internal economy and in anything except from the technical point of view, the ships of any date from the middle of the seventeenth century to nearly the middle of the eighteenth, differ from each other. The hulks in Portsmouth harbour still afloat, whether built in 1805 or in 1850, to the landsman's eye are alike.

The five decks of the three-decker were named upper, main, middle, lower, and orlop. The poop (*Castilla de Poppa*) was a Spanish word, and we learnt it from the Spaniards—we learnt much of our sea knowledge from the Dutchmen and Spaniards—the poop was, and still is, that part of the ship especially allotted to the officers, and some of the customs of the sea presently to be stated peculiarly belong to it and still survive, even in the modern iron tank cargo carrier. It occupied a great part of the upper deck, extending from the stern about half-way to the mainmast, the space between the break of the poop and the mainmast being the quarter-deck, the parade ground of the floating barracks, the spot where Nelson fell. The quarter-deck is still sacred to the officers, and a place of many ceremonies ; but much of its glory has departed, for though the great steering wheels of modern men-of-war are sometimes still upon the quarter-deck, the helmsman is on the bridge guiding the steam-steering wheel with his finger. Between the

mainmast and the foremast were the gangways, and forward of the foremast, the forecastle.

The main deck, as its name implies, was the principal "storey" of the structure. It communicated with the quarter-deck by several ladders, its after end was portioned off, and the space given to the admirals' or senior officers' quarters. Outside this, round the stern, and also from two other decks, ran those galleries called stern walks, familiar in the pictures, and of which there still remain slight substitutes on the larger modern ships. Amidships, upon the main deck, the space was reserved for carrying on the mechanical work of the ship. Here sailmakers, ropemakers, blacksmiths, armourers, coopers, and carpenters wrought at their several trades. Forward of this was the galley, where the meals for a thousand persons were cooked, and forward of this again were enclosures for the officers' live-stock—if they were lucky enough to have any. Along the whole length of the deck on both sides were the rows of "thirty-twos," seventeen on either side—grim reminders that from this deck and from all others, when the roll of the drum beat to quarters, carpenters, blacksmiths, and the rest of them dropped their tools, and from peaceful artisans rushed to their stations and became sail-trimmers or gunners. Below the main deck was the middle deck, reached by a double ladder amidships; at the bottom of the ladders were the entry ports on either side—the main entrances to the ship. In the after-part of this deck was the wardroom, the wardroom officers' cabins occupying spaces between the guns aft. Petty officers, landsmen, and marines lived amidships, and forward and up in the bows was the sick bay or hospital. From seventeen ports on either side, just as on the deck above, the muzzles of the

thirty-twos pointed, and besides these there were probably a couple of eight-inch guns.

Below the middle was the lower or gun deck, sustaining the heaviest of the guns, 4 eight-inch and 28 thirty-two pounders. In the after-part was the gun-room, separated from the rest of the deck by a row of muskets and marines' bayonets, and within the barricade the great ship's tiller traversed. Volunteers, masters, assistants, and similar ranks of officers messed here, and the sleeping cabins of some of the junior wardroom officers were on either side. Before the barricade of small arms lived the main body of seamen, their mess tables slung by long iron hooks from the beams above, and between the guns at meal times—at nights the hammocks in place of the mess tables. Amidships were the ship's four main pumps, equal to clearing her well of water at the rate of 9 tons a minute, and forward were the ranges of cables for sheet and bower anchors—the great sheet-anchor hempen cable 26 inches in circumference.

Below the middle deck was the orlop, forward the fore cockpit, and many storerooms, and gunner, boatswain, and carpenter's cabins. And below these again, the principal magazine containing about 35 tons of powder, guarded from fire by arrangements of water-tanks and pipes for flooding; no light was admitted to the magazine, except through the light room, an apartment adjoining but well separated, and a sentry was on duty day and night at the passage to the entrance. The after cockpit—where Nelson died—was the home of the youngsters when the ship was not in action, and in the hour of battle was the operating room of the surgeons. Below this was the after magazine for

small arms, and filled cartridges for the great guns, and more storerooms ; and below the orlop amidships were the holds for ballast and the wells.

The captain who commanded a line of battle ship of the class described had every reason to walk his quarter-deck with the air of a great personage. If nowadays the modern battleship costs more in money to build, the old ship carried in her timbers the growth of ninety or a hundred years of English oak, and a fifty-acre forest was needed for the two thousand well-grown trees required to find the timber for a seventy-four. The cost of building her with all equipment, exclusive of provisions, was about £120,000, and a couple of hundred shipwrights took a year to do the work.

Quite as beautiful, if less imposing in their appearance, were the little vessels at the bottom of the *Navy List*. Brigs with a complement of sixty men and a broadside of 90 lbs. Schooners with raking masts, when a rake was needed to keep their bows out of water as they were driven along, reeling beneath the weight of fore and aft canvas, bearing home news of victory from the scene of action ; and cutters with thirty or forty men of a crew, commanded by some "sucking Nelson" of tender years, but with heart great enough to attack an enemy's frigate if luck would only bring him athwart one, so that he might use his six-pounder pop-guns—a broadside that his second in command, a grey-headed boatswain's mate, could carry in his arms.

The largest and best of the East India Company's cruisers differed very little from ships of the line in the Royal Navy, just as the brigs of war and such small vessels in the service of the King only differed from

merchant vessels in that they carried no cargoes, and were commanded by a lieutenant in the navy, instead of a merchant shipmaster. In the modern royal and merchant navies, ships, officers, and men are entirely unlike; a hundred years ago almost all the difference lay in the ownership of the vessels. Now, the only connecting link between ships flying the red and the white ensigns—traders and fighting ships—are those entitled to display the blue ensign, the mark of the Royal Naval Reserve, of vessels subsidised, or otherwise liable to be used by the Government in time of war.

Early in the century nearly every merchant ship carried guns, and there were regular "armed merchantmen," "letters of marque," "privateers," expressions having practically the same meaning, viz., vessels privately owned but equipped to fight, and authorised to do so by the State. War being the normal condition brought about this state of affairs. The trader, however peacefully inclined he might be, could not sail in any sea without risk of falling in with an enemy, and convoy could not always be obtained. Where there was no danger from the ships of an unfriendly power, pirates and savages had to be reckoned with, and besides considerations of self-defence, a well-armed merchantman often earned something for her owners and crew, by the capture of vessels of her own class belonging to the enemy.

The Company's Eastern monopolies were the source of enormous riches, but the cost was in proportion. A return of the losses in the naval service by wreck and capture at sea, shows that for a period of two financial years, 1807-8 and 1808-9, 14 vessels had been lost or captured, their value, including money expended in

manning them, etc., exceeding £1,200,000 sterling. The Accountant General of the Company estimated that if this sum had not been lost to the service it would have earned for the shareholders upwards of £1,000,000. The Company, therefore, had every inducement to arm their vessels and supply them with capable officers and drilled crews. The records of the time give accounts of many well-fought actions between Company's ships and French war-vessels, and when one of the enemy's privateers fell foul of an East Indiaman under the impression that she had an easy capture in a peaceful merchantman, it more often than otherwise ended in the Frenchman getting a sound thrashing, if not in his capture.

The North Country collier was *the* type of our merchantmen at the beginning of the century, and you can see the North Country collier still afloat, with very small difference, the same kind of hull that Cook went to sea in. The East and West Indiamen were the crack vessels of the time—ships ranging from 300 tons to 800 tons, but they were no more types of our merchant service as a whole, than are the Atlantic Greyhounds of our Mercantile Marine now. Down to the sixties folks talked with pride of uncle George, who commanded a fine East or West Indiaman, much as they do now of uncle Adolphus, who is captain of a P. & O. or Cunard Liner, “and belongs to the Naval Reserve, you know.”

In those days there were rigs whose very names are nearly forgotten, Pinks, Snows, Hermaphrodite, and Jackass brigs, and the like, merely varieties of two-masted or barque-rigged vessels, differing so slightly that in these days of steam we cannot understand why

sailors had such fancies. Why, for example, should a man put a small trysail-mast abaft his brig's mainmast, and call his vessel a Snow? Did such an alteration make a perceptible difference in her speed, her steering, or her capacity to sail close to the wind? Contemporary reading only informs us that experts differed then on such matters, just as engineers differ now over boiler and fuel questions, and certainly the modern sailor knows too little of sailing to be able to enlighten us on technicalities which our forefathers disputed.

Rope-rigging, heavy spars, and big single topsails in the beginning of the century, common to all ships, made it difficult, even for a sailor, to distinguish between a merchantman and a war-vessel when a ship was sighted hull down. Hulls, too, were not as they now are, absolutely unlike. No one now could mistake any merchant steamer afloat for any ship on the *Navy List*. But the wooden hulls of the smaller frigates and inferior rates differed in no material respect from those of the better class of merchantmen—it was even quite possible in the present reign to mistake Geordie's collier *Sarah Jane* of Hull, for Her Majesty's brig of war *Mutine*.

But inboard things were different. Merchant ships were much smaller than they are now, yet carried many more men, and these were crowded together in an ill-ventilated forecastle, which, if below the one deck, was so evil-smelling and foul, that in fine weather even old salts preferred to sleep on the forehatch; and if on deck was so ill-protected from the sea that it was continually awash, and the crew, as often as not, slept in their oil-skins. The outward aspect of the merchant-ship has changed, that is apparent to every one; but the accom-

modation of the seamen remains much the same, and in the modern man-o'-war, with every desire on the part of his superiors to treat the bluejacket well, the limited space in which he is quartered leaves him in this respect no better off, if so well, as were the sailors of the old line of battle ships.

CHAPTER II

SEAPORTS AND DOCKYARDS

The Old Seaside Population—Shipwrights and Thieves—The Story of Some Ships—The Great Timber Question—“What’s in a Name?”

THE story of the changes in ships and in the people who live on them and by them is nowhere more clearly written than in the history of the growth or decline in importance of our seaports. Take for a text Portsmouth, Chatham, or Plymouth, London, Bristol, Liverpool, Glasgow, Hull or Southampton, at the beginning of the century, and the story of the changes in shipbuilding and what has happened in the dockyards is, of itself, a whole view of the century’s sea story.

In Portsmouth, when the century opened, the men of Anson’s squadron were just dying out, and the townsfolk were reading in the papers (one paper, perhaps, between twenty or thirty customers of the “George” or the “Blue Posts”) obituary notices such as these :—

“On the 13th February 1804, at the age of 109, George Gregory, the last of the *Centurion*’s crew, died at Kingston. He was pressed from the brig *Mary of North Shields* when in the Downs, and he first went

to sea in 1714. Lately, at Portsmouth, Captain Hall, aged 91. He was a surgeon's mate of the *Centurion*, and went round the world with Lord Anson in the year 1740, when the Manilla galleon was taken. Mr Hall came home surgeon of her. It was after this voyage, which lasted three years and nine months, that Lord Anson, when he landed here on the Point, fell upon his knees and offered an ejaculatory prayer to Him who had preserved him from such imminent dangers. Captain Fortescue is the only person living who went on that voyage."

Penny a mile excursion trains now carry Manchester and Birmingham operatives on holidays to view the sights of Portsmouth. A hundred years ago there were things quite as wonderful for such people to look upon, if they had then had the time and money, or the audacity and extravagance, to journey such a distance sight-seeing in a market-waggon or on a stage-coach.

If they had walked upon Southsea beach, for example, they might have seen lying at Spithead as many ships as were assembled at the last Jubilee Review. A couple of hundred sail waiting for convoy was not unusual, and fifty King's ships, from the towering three-decker to a little dispatch cutter, were much prettier sights to look upon, and not a whit less imposing than a modern fleet.

There were no pleasure piers for bands to play upon then, and no steamboats calling at them, but there were hundreds of watermen's wherries, bumboats, sailors' boats, Jew dealers' boats, and men-o'-war cutters continually going to and fro the fleet off the Motherbank. There were no fine monuments to sea and soldier heroes along the sea front; the *Victory's* anchor was not

esteemed beyond its value in wood and iron, and so far from standing on an ornamental pedestal for folks to gaze at, hung at the *Victory's* bows or lay in Anchor Row, of no more account then than was *The Ship* among the other first rates of His Majesty's fleet.

Nelson, arriving at the George Inn in High Street about daybreak on the 14th September 1805, ate his breakfast, then chancing to look out of the window, saw an enormous crowd waiting for him in the street below, so he slipped quietly out a back way in Penny Street, and so made his way to Southsea Common, and there, from the spot on which the *Victory's* anchor is now erected as a monument, he embarked for Trafalgar. Thus wrote Southey at a time (1813) when the Portsmouth crowd and Southsea beach and the George Inn were as they were when Nelson knew them :—"A crowd collected in his train, pressing forward to obtain sight of his face ; many were in tears, and many knelt before him and blessed him as they passed. . . . They pressed upon the parapet to gaze after him when his barge pushed off, and he was returning their cheers by waving his hat. The sentinels who endeavoured to prevent them from trespassing upon this ground were wedged among the crowd, and an officer, who not very prudently upon such an occasion ordered them to drive the people down with their bayonets, was compelled speedily to retreat ; for the people would not be debarred from gazing till the last moment upon the hero—the darling hero—of England."

On Southsea beach there were two monuments of a kind. Felton's Gibbet still stood, a guide for little vessels making the harbour, and upon the Gosport shore some ghastly remains of Jack the Painter's body still

swung in chains from the *Arethusa's* mainmast, upon which curious gallows, many then living, had seen the incendiary hanged for his attempt to burn the dockyard. The Round Towers of the Blockhouses on either side the harbour were then kept garrisoned, the men in them ready to "heave taught from towre to towre the mighty chain of Yron to block an enemy's entrance," a means of defence put there first in Henry VIII.'s time, and which remained, some parts of it, until almost the present.

Cumberland Fort was just built, and Southsea Castle was being put in order to resist the invader, and all over the town were walls and ramparts, and gates, and moats, and drawbridges, separating the civil town from the military one, and devised to protect the yard, the gunwharf, the victualling office, and the rest of the important Government establishments, so these things remained until the seventies. The visitor, if he had taken an interest in the townsfolk and had poked about among them during the war period, would have found none but seafaring people, or persons who lived honestly, or otherwise, by sailors. Jews, seamen, and harlots crowded the streets, and talked of nothing but the French, prize money, the press-gang, and the French prisoners.

Marryat has so well described it all, that the Logs and Point and the Blue Posts are familiar to people all over the world. Between the stories he tells and the stories in the local papers of the time, I can find no difference. For instance, the Portsmouth inns were notorious for their extortions, and a report in a local paper about 1810 tells of a landlord who charged a gentleman a guinea a day for the use of three rooms

for himself and family, and would not let them unless they were taken for a week certain. The guest only wanted the rooms for a few hours until the coach for London was ready. A captain in the navy hearing the discussion between landlord and guest, asked leave to take over the rooms, and this was agreed upon.

"Now, landlord," says the captain, "I want all three rooms got ready for me to-night."

"What, all three, sir?"

"Yes, haven't I paid for them?"

In the evening the gallant officer returned, bringing with him his boatswain and two mates. These men were ordered to keep watch and watch, and every half-hour to report the time, and every four hours pipe the watch on deck, each man in his particular room. After one night of this treatment the landlord returned the three guineas.

True stories of press-gangs collected would of themselves make a good-sized and very readable book. In 1803 an impress officer at ten at night assembled a party of marines at Gosport, making as much fuss as possible, and giving out that there was a serious riot on the Fort Moncton side of Haslar Creek, marched his men over the bridge. Thousands, of course, rushed across to see the fun, then the officer drew up his men across the road and pressed every man likely to be useful. Dozens were released next day on their presenting proofs that they were apprentices or masters. I wonder what an apprentice or a master would say now if he was taken off in this fashion, and only released after spending the night in a receiving-ship. Imagine the scene in Smock Alley or Bathing-

House Square when a press-gang appeared at the door of the "Jolly Sailors" or the "Help the Lame Dog over the Stile," and took from Pol and Bet and Sue their fancy men!

The history of Portsmouth Point would, if it were written, be more than half the history of the navy. What embarkations and debarkations have taken place there, and there have been other sensations. Thirty or forty persons were blown to pieces there in 1809 by the explosion of several barrels of powder, belonging to the stores of a regiment then about to embark. An old woman, a soldier's wife, was smoking her pipe, and she knocked the ashes out on the pebbles, when—puff! half Point was blown away. Fancy handling ammunition in such fashion now; and what fights with the press there were! The men surprised, half-drunk in some low tavern, fought with their fists, with wooden benches, with pewter pots, the women with mops and brooms and with their talons. These forces combined disputed with the marines and seamen the way to the boats inch by inch, while the little Jew rascal who, for a consideration, had betrayed the sailors to the press, slunk off with his blood-money and such trifles as, in the excitement, the combatants had left on the floor of the pot-house.

Another of the sights of Portsmouth was the prizes lying in the harbour. A picture of the time shows a whole fleet of them; and as a companion to it there is a view of Southampton that makes of that important seaport a tiny fishing village. And what is written of Portsmouth applies equally well to Plymouth and our other royal naval seaports. We could even then boast of big naval establishments abroad, at Bermuda,

at Malta, and at Halifax, for instance ; though that at Sydney, now one of the most important, had not then been thought of. The breakwater at Plymouth was begun in 1812, and took half the century to finish, and they have been adding to the other dockyards acres of basins, docks, and "works," until the dock walls now enclose a town.

The French prisoners in the hulks and the temporary Government prisons were not the least curious of the sights. The cost of their keep in England ran to £1000 a day. In Porchester Castle there were at one time as many as 5000, and at Forton and the hulks in Portsmouth Harbour 13,000 more. These men frequently escaped, and in a very remarkable manner ; for example, in April 1808 eleven Frenchmen cut a hole in the *Vigilant* hulk, swam to another ship, and there secured a boat, clothed themselves in the greatcoats of the boat's crew, then pulled to the master attendant's tender, a fine little cutter worth £1000, and sailed coolly out of Portsmouth Harbour, taking the cutter's anchor-watch of three men with them to Cherbourg.

We did not treat the prisoners badly, though we were accused of doing so, and a great deal of correspondence took place between the French and English Governments on the subject. We had prisoners of our own in France, and their stories of French prisons were not calculated to allay the anti-French feeling in the seaports. Sir Sydney Smith's treatment, and Captain Wright's death in the Temple at Paris, and other stories of the kind, can be set off for anything alleged against us. Our prisoners of war led an easy life of it, carving toys out of the beef bones that they

saved from their rations, to sell to the children of the villages near their prisons; and a generation ago you could meet any number of people who had seen the Frenchmen doing this work and plaiting straw hats from their straw beds in the rooms and grounds of Porchester Castle. In 1810 there was a long correspondence over a proposed exchange of prisoners, to which we would not agree, as the French wanted to exchange 12,000 Englishmen for our 50,000 prisoners. We would have even agreed to this, though many of their prisoners were women and children detained in violation of the laws of nations, but the French had a number of our Spanish allies in their prisons, and we refused terms because the French would not release them. Though from 1803 to 1815 the cost of maintaining French prisoners to us was about six and a half million sterling, and only one and a half per cent. of the 50,000 were sick, it has always been said in France that we allowed prisoners to die of hunger and cold.

There were naval as well as military volunteers when the fear of Bonaparte's invasion was upon us, though the Sea Fencibles, as they were called, were not thought any too highly of, to judge from contemporary accounts of them; thus a writer in 1809:—“The public benefit derived from the Sea Fencibles, a force costing £200,000 a year, I have never been able to learn, as they are enrolled only to serve in case of invasion. Their officers have no command over them, and the amount of their present service is only to muster once a week, for which each man receives one shilling. According to the lists they are round the coasts of the three kingdoms, and doing

nothing, while their officers are paid much more than are the officers of ships in commission."

The great trading ports and their population have changed no less than the royal seaports. There are columns of figures showing the values of imports and exports, ships owned, and the rest of it, but they look so dry and uninteresting, and can so easily be got from books of reference, that I will not quote them. London was in 1800, as now, the first of our seaports, and Liverpool came next. London did two-thirds of the whole trade of the kingdom, and there were 2666 vessels owned in the port. Shortly, the three principal ports, London, Liverpool, and Bristol, measured by their customs duty, stood thus:—London, £5,000,000; Liverpool, £649,684; Bristol, £334,909.

The docks of London, as we know them, have grown up entirely in the present century. Fifty years ago you might have talked with men who could remember when the landmarks of Blackwall Reach were grim gibbet posts for the bodies of pirates. When the century opened ships lay in the river, and discharged into lighters at Blackwall, whence the goods were carried to rotting old wooden quays at London Bridge. These were the times when river robbery was a thriving trade, and fortunes were built on the proceeds of thievery. The great seaports in the North were at the beginning of the century of no more account than Falmouth is now, compared with their present-day importance.

Generations of Government dockyard men have been born in the great naval seaports, have served their apprenticeships, grown grey in the service of

the yards, retired on their pensions and died, knowing no more of actual wartime, having no more real idea of what a state of naval war means, than if they had been born, brought up, and worked out their lives in the heart of the Australian bush. When these men talked shop—of the refitting of this vessel, the docking of that—they might have been builders of market waggons for all that their conversation had to do with naval glory. You might have mingled with them any time these last fifty years and have never heard mention of prizes, privateers, press-gangs, prisoners of war—words that were in the mouths of everyone a hundred years ago, and are still rightly to be found in ninety per cent. of the naval books published now.

They were building ships in the little English seaports early in the century, launching fine frigates and sloops of war in places that would to-day go wild with excitement if the local boat-builder had a moderate-sized schooner on his slips. The supply of timber was the one great question agitating the shipbuilding interest, and the adjacency of suitable timber regulated the position of a shipbuilding yard, just as that of coal and iron influence a "works" now. But the situations of the King's yards at Portsmouth, at Plymouth, and at Chatham, and at the other dock-yards and naval establishments, were, of course, chosen for strategic reasons, and "our natural enemy" had decided these things for us long before the beginning of the century.

There is much to see, of course, at the Royal Yards at Portsmouth or Plymouth now, and when a party of visitors is shown round by a constable

of the dockyard division of the metropolitan police, a non-expert leaves the place, after walking over some miles of ground, with a confused notion that he has seen more machinery in an hour than he will ever be likely to see again in a lifetime. Steam, hydraulics, and electricity leave him wondering what they want with nine thousand men in Portsmouth Yard. In 1801 there were only four thousand shipwrights employed in all the King's yards. The old dockyard was under the general superintendence of a Commissioner, chosen from the captains of the Royal Navy, who occupied a position similar to that of the present Admiral Superintendent. The principal officers under him were the Master Shipwright, two Master Attendants, a Clerk of the Check, a Storekeeper, a Clerk of the Survey, a Clerk of the Rope Yard. The Master Shipwright was the most important officer in the yard, having four assistant master shipwrights under him, one of whom, called the Timber Master, had charge of all stores of timber, and directed what pieces should be used, and the order of their uses. The Master Attendant and his assistant controlled the sail lofts and rigging houses, and saw to the mooring and unmooring of ships, and the moving of them about the harbour. The Clerk of the Check kept the men's time, paid them, and did, or rather superintended the clerks who did, the clerical work. He, too, with the aid of the Clerk of the Survey and the Storekeeper, bought new stores and sold condemned stores, jobbing as much as he could, which came easy and was natural at the time to every one. The Clerk of the Rope House was a very important person, having full charge of all the hemp, tar, and

similar materials used in the rope-walks, and having many ropemakers under him, as may be imagined in the days when wire rigging was not thought of.

Up to 1805 wages were paid only once a quarter, and it was the end of the succeeding quarter before the calculations were completed and payment made. Meanwhile, the men lived by obtaining advances from people called "dealers," shop and tavern keepers, who made the most of the credit they gave. The 1805 reform instituted the payment of subsistence money, by which the dockyard matey, as he was called, was allowed to draw from the Clerk of the Check from three-fourths to seven-eighths of his week's earnings on the first Saturday in each month.

These distinguished persons were paid salaries ranging from £650 to a Builder or a Clerk of the Check, or a Master Attendant, and £500 to a Clerk of the Rope-walk, down to £100 a year to a common clerk, whose business it was to add two and two together, and who might have been Mr Dickens, the father of Charles Dickens, who, it will be remembered, was a pay clerk in the yard at Portsmouth.

The workmen were divided into artificers and labourers; these were shipwrights, sail-makers, rope-makers, joiners, mast-makers, boat-builders, blacksmiths, riggers, and a dozen others whose titles still remain, while their duties are as similar as those of the driver of the fast express from Euston to Liverpool and the driver of the Mail Coach *Red Rocket*.

The wages of these workmen were practically the same as they were in the reign of Queen Anne, and the hideous complications involved in paying them, by job, by piece, by tides, by task, and by a dozen other

different methods, have defied the efforts of a Cambridge mathematical scholar, whose aid I have sought, to explain them. This much is clear, Scavermen got 3d. a day in lieu of chips, and I shall presently explain that chips were important. Scavermen were labourers who pumped out docks, and they were paid 3s. 6d. a day when outside labour was only getting 10s. 6d. a week. A Board appointed to economise, and, if possible, also put a stop to swindling, could not understand why. The average earnings of a shipwright were 7s. 6d. a day. From 6 A.M. till 6 P.M. in the summer, and from daylight till dark in the winter, were the regular working hours; but overtime, working on Sunday, during the dinner half-hour, and at night, brought up their wages. A list of wages published in 1806 shows that a working shipbuilder got 2s. 1d. a day, a foreman or quarterman 2s. 2d., labourers 1s. 2d., pitch heaters 1s. 6d., joiners 1s. 8d., oakum boys 8d. The quarterman was a sort of ganger of shipwrights who delivered an account of works into the office, where it was classed and priced, and it was in the interest of the quarterman and of the clerks to increase the general earnings of a gang, so that when all were friendly, and things went smoothly, no one was short of a pound or two. Foremen of different branches were allowed also to take apprentices, two-thirds of whose pay went to the foreman, and one-third to the parents of the apprentice, a perquisite then of considerable value. The clerical work involved in the complicated system of payment cost at Plymouth, in 1801, £1040 per annum, and the workmen's wages for the same year amounted to £206,064.

A visitor to Portsmouth to see the dockyard in 1801 would not have had the difficulty in getting in that he

would have now. No policeman or sentry would trouble himself in the least about him. There was an old one-legged porter in a lodge, whose only business was to ring the bell morning and evening. The interior immediately after entering has not much altered. Mast-houses and ponds, and neat red brick buildings, residences of the senior officials, the Commissioner's house, and the Royal Academy, now the Naval College, all remain pretty much the same. But away to the left, where the building slips ran down to the water, you could see the rows of French prizes lying in the harbour, where now lie the hulks of ships that were the pride of the navy fifty years ago.

Anchor Row was there, and they boasted of the great thirty hundredweight anchors that were forged in the yard ; on an old hulk a visitor could any time in daylight see the ropemakers stretching hempen cables, with the aid of these weighty anchors, forged in a smithy, where there was a marvellous pair of bellows, so big that the apparatus was worked by a windlass, which was driven by a man, who, slung by the armpits, trod a treadmill, which in its turn revolved the windlass ! But this remarkable device was becoming antiquated ; people were thinking of steam. Brunel, the father of another of that name to be heard of later, in 1804 introduced his wonderful block-making machinery driven by steam. Fourteen principal little machines did the work ; five of these made the shell, and nine the pin and sheave ; the man put in some wood and iron, and out came a block, and they have not beaten Brunel senior's idea even at this end of the century.

Another great sight in the yard was the rope-walk, 1100 ft. long, 54 ft. wide, and three storeys high, where

they spun hemp into rope, right from making spun-yarn, to a 7-tons weight cable, requiring eighty men to work the job, taking care always to spin into it the "rogues' yarn," that coloured heart-yarn that distinguishes Government from private property in rope, and which in those days merely served to guarantee the receiver of stolen property that the rope offered was of the best make. Then, not to mention the sail-lofts and rigging-houses, mast-ponds, mast-houses, and the building-slips—the last-named much as they appear to-day, except in the matter of what is building in them—there was the copper foundry. It required 4000 sheets of copper to cover the bottom of a ship of the line, and a ton weight of nails to fasten it on. During the French war they worked up old copper after recasting it; in one year making about 1200 tons of it in this way.

In 1817 a Plymouth newspaper described an operation at the local dockyard that at that time exceeded anything that had ever been done before in the annals of shipbuilding. Without quoting the rapturous language of the local scribe, this great achievement shall be told in a few words. The *Kent*, an 80-gun ship, was hauled up on a repairing slip. The job was, in truth, a big operation, and the whole dockyard took a week working all day, and by candle-light at night, to prepare for it. The *Kent* weighed 1964 tons, and in forty minutes she was hauled high and dry out of the water on to the slip. The means employed was a long pull and a strong pull; 1400 men operated the power, and they worked with fourteen capstans, thirty-two treble-fold blocks, with tackle of 7-, 8-, and 9-inch rope, eight 23-inch cables lashed to the ship with selvegee strops

of 1500 yarns each (no wonder Jasper, Mr W. S. Gilbert's old sailor, was such a bore on the value of the selvegee), and she was buoyed up at her after-end by four lighters. Any number of anchors and chains to hold the standing parts of the tackles were buried in the ground. Then all being ready, the chronicler relates that the word was given, and, in the presence of thousands of spectators, and cheered by bands of music and inspiring shouts, the 1400 men hauled on the tackles, and hove on the capstan bars, and the *Kent* began to move up the inclined plane at the rate of 8 or 10 inches at a time, as the purchases acted!

People no doubt remember the disaster in the Thames in June 1898, when the *Albion*, a first-class battleship of 12,950 tons, was launched by the Thames Ironworks and Shipbuilding Company. She was the largest man-o'-war ever built on the Thames, and the Duchess of York touched the electric button that sent her sliding down the ways. Everything had, apparently, passed off happily, and cheers were being raised in celebration of the event, when a staging which had been erected around a Japanese warship in course of construction was swept away by the backwash raised by the *Albion*. More than one hundred people were suddenly thrown into the water, of whom thirty-five are known to have been drowned. There was a curious parallel to this disaster in September 1825 at Portsmouth, when the *Princess Charlotte*, of 110 guns, was launched, Prince Leopold performing the ceremony. A great concourse of spectators had gathered upon one of the 20-feet bridges crossing one of the basins in the yard. The crowd caused the bridge to sway, and the

great disturbance of the water when the *Princess Charlotte* slid down the ways completed the mischief, the bridge gave way, and about twenty persons were drowned. This is the only serious accident that is remembered in the Royal yards in many years, notwithstanding that such wonderful operations as that described in connection with the *Kent* were going on by no means infrequently.

As I have hinted, people in the King's yards were not particularly honest in the beginning of the century. In the Court of King's Bench, in July 1801, two partners in one of the largest copper-working firms in London were found guilty of embezzling the King's stores from Portsmouth. In the course of the evidence, it was shown that the loss of Royal Naval stores by embezzlement amounted to not less than £500,000 annually. An officer of the dockyard discovered several casks filled with copper sheathing and bolts marked with the broad arrow, publicly exposed for sale by these "merchants," who were proved to have carried on a system of thieving for years, by which the workmen of the yard carried out the copper, and disposed of it to a local receiver, who in turn sent it to London.

An old writer on the town of Portsmouth stated:—"The poor people among us are chiefly supported by their labour in the dockyard. These men are much eased in housekeeping by the beef and pork they procure from the ships, and the firing they consequently bring home with them once a day from the yard." This was the time when every one employed in the public service had his perquisites: for example, the shipwrights were entitled to take home chips—it may be depended upon that they took care to make plenty of them, and make

them large enough for their domestic fires. Mr Colquhoun, the Thames Police magistrate, attacked this state of affairs. A hundred years ago he wrote :—" Many vessels in the coasting trade, and even ships of foreign nations, are said to touch at Portsmouth and Plymouth merely for the purpose of purchasing cheap stores ; and it is well known that many dealers in naval stores in the neighbourhood of the dockyards are chiefly supplied in this way. The system which prevails at present with regard to the sale of old stores not only proves a kind of safeguard to these fraudulent dealers, but it is also subject to great abuses in the delivery of larger quantities not included in the public sales, by which the parties perpetrating this species of plunder are said to pocket considerable sums of money. The artificers of the dockyards, availing themselves of their perquisites of chips, not only commit great frauds through this medium, by often cutting up useful timber, and wasting time in doing so, but also in frequently concealing within their bundles of chips, copper bolts, and other valuable articles which are removed by their wives and children, and afterwards sold to itinerant Jews, or to the dealers in old iron and stores, who are always to be found in abundance wherever the dockyards are situated."

Mr Colquhoun then goes on to estimate the cost to Government of the chips perquisite, which, with the articles concealed in the bundles, he calculated came to £140,000 a year. Give the men 6d. per day extra instead of the chips, said Mr Colquhoun, and a saving will be effected of £117,500 a year. And the Government took his advice, first considering the subject for a decade. Another remark of Mr Colquhoun's explains the " rogues

yarn," reference to which I made a few sentences back :—
" Among the multitude of criminal people who are concerned in it, some are said to keep men constantly employed in untwisting cordage, for the purpose of removing the King's mark or coloured strand which is introduced into it as a check against fraud: while others are, in like manner, employed in knocking the broad arrow out of copper bolts, nails, bar-iron, and other articles on which it is impressed, so as to elude detection."

It is but bare justice, however, to state that they turned out good work in both the Government and private shipbuilding yards. Ships, it is true, were sometimes reported bad before they were clear of the riggers' hands, but this was owing to defective planks, or badly pickled timber. Examples of sound work are still afloat. Take the history of one or two ships as an illustration.

The *St Vincent*, launched at Plymouth in 1815, was the second of her name in the service, for a century before a ship named after the saint was captured from the French. This second *St Vincent*, long a flagship for the later years of her life, did duty as a training ship for seamen boys at Portsmouth, but in 1899 the Admiralty thought she was too old to be healthy, and at the time of writing a plan is under consideration for giving the youngsters other quarters.

The *Foudroyant* was launched in 1798, and would have been afloat now, but for an accident. It will be remembered that she was sold a few years ago to a German firm of shipbrokers; bought back again by an English syndicate who had the idea of exhibiting her at all the English seaports; was caught in a gale when

anchored off Blackpool in June 1897 ; was driven ashore, and in the course of a few weeks went to pieces.

In private yards shipbuilding for the King was carried on much more extensively than is generally known. For example, there were afloat in 1800 sixteen King's ships which had been built in Liverpool during the previous twenty years, the ships varying from 32- to 50-gun frigates. In 1813 a list of King's ships, building in Government and in private yards, shows vessels on the stocks at Deptford, Woolwich, Chatham, Portsmouth, Plymouth, and Milford (King's yards), and on private slips at Dartmouth, Brighton, Ipswich, Sandwich, Lynn, Bursledon, Southampton, Bridport, Shields, Bideford, Rochester, Hythe, Redbridge, Topsham, and several others, besides many yards on the Thames and Medway. On the Thames alone in 1814, twenty - two yards were in existence, with between them forty-one building slips, but the peace threw most of them idle, and only eighteen of the slips were occupied. In 1806, of merchant ships alone, returns show the following figures :—Building on contract, 50 vessels, equalling 8961 tons ; on speculation, 124, equalling 21,300 tons ; and launched and for sale, 22, equalling 4725 tons. In the port of London alone, 77 ships, with a tonnage of 18,000, were for sale.

They were beginning to build ships in the Colonies, too. In 1814, at the request of the Admiralty, 150 shipwrights volunteered from Plymouth Yard to go to the Lakes in Canada to build vessels. They were to receive pay and allowances equal to about 13s. per day. *The Sydney (New South Wales) Gazette* of April 17th, 1819, says :—" We had the pleasure, on the 7th of the present month, to witness the launch of the new schooner,

built at His Majesty's dockyard at Sydney, by command of His Royal Highness the Prince Regent, as a present for the King of the Sandwich Islands, and named by His Excellency the Governor, *The Prince Regent*. The novelty of the sight attracted a great number of spectators, as well on shore as on the water; and the stately manner in which she first saluted the retiring wave afforded great satisfaction. She is a very fine vessel; her burthen 40 tons; and will be despatched to the King of the Sandwich Islands as soon as completely rigged and properly equipped for so long a voyage."

But long before this time they had built capital little vessels on the shores of Sydney Harbour. Convict shipwrights were plentiful, and the art of stealing copper, as the records show, got a new life in the young Colony; one prisoner's name has been handed down to posterity for his skill in thieving copper bolts. In 1805 they refitted, in Sydney dockyard, Flinders's old surveying ship, the *Investigator*, in such a fashion that she was navigated to England after all the naval experts had condemned her as only fit to be broken up. The little 29-ton *Cumberland*, in which Flinders would have reached England if he had not been made prisoner at the Mauritius by the French, and the *Francis*, a schooner of 40 tons, which took part of the shipwrecked crew to England, were both built in Sydney when the century was a year old. Now, beside the great iron shipyards on the shores of Sydney Harbour, you can still hear the caulkers' mallets, and see the chips fly from the adzes of shipwrights working in little yards where shipbuilding, as distinct from boiler-making, still goes on. Pearling luggers are being launched for the South Seas, year in

and year out, and so late as 1899 I saw within six months a little 10-ton lugger laid down, built, launched, and rigged, and read of her coming safely through a hurricane, which had battered and half-wrecked more than one 4000-ton steamer, and which she had weathered in waters a thousand miles away from her birthplace.

India had long been building teak ships, men-of-war for the East India Company, as well as merchantmen. In 1799 there arrived in the Thames the *Scalby Castle*, of 1200 tons, built at Bombay by Parsees, for John Company, and in March of the same year, a Parsee shipowner launched from his own yard, in the same port, a vessel of 1400 tons. Down to 1848 they were building men-of-war for the English Royal Navy in Bombay. Cursetjee Rustomjee, the Parsee head builder of the Hon. Company's yard in Bombay, was a famous builder. He entered the yard in 1800 as an apprentice to the shipwrights, under his uncle Framjee, then master builder. He was made fourth assistant in 1805, and was rapidly promoted, until in 1844 he became head builder. In the course of that period, there had been built at the yard 100 ships, large and small, for the Company, and for the Crown 10 line of battle ships, 5 frigates, and 6 brigs, besides 2 frigates and 5 sloops for the Sultan of Muscat, and any number of merchant vessels for English and Indian shipowners.

The British working man has a deservedly high reputation all the world over, but he will have to exert himself if he is to retain his pride of place. In Bombay in the seventies I saw an old Scotch shipwright rather astonished when he saw Parsees come on board a ship and caulk her decks, just as well and quite as

quickly as Glasgow caulkers could have done the work. It was a year or two after the first visit of the Shah of Persia to England, and the Parsees in their Persian head-dress, long-pointed shoes, and clean white garments, quite shocked the old ship-carpenter, who said they were not shipwrights, but Persian noblemen ; but the ring of their mallets sounded true in his ears, and he was too honest a man not to recognise that they knew their business.

I have said that timber was the vexed question in the early part of the century, for we were denuding our forests rapidly, and in a state of war there was no telling how long we might successfully import it. In Surrey, in one year, 15,000 trees were cut down, and in the fifteen years ending 1808, the price of oak had risen from 1s. 6d. to 2s. 6d and 3s. a foot. To find timber, they had taken to building from the forests at the foot of the Grampians. The trees were floated by means of sluices and dams to sawmills on the banks of a rivulet (the Drue), thence to the river Spey, where the logs were made up in rafts of about 15,000 logs, and sold in the English market. Mr W. Osbourne of Hull, who had for £10,000 bought the right to cut timber on the Duke of Gordon's forest estates, converted his privilege into ships, varying from 130 to 600 tons, and by the year 1802 this shipbuilder had turned out some fifty vessels. The timber was Highland pine, and every ship built from it proved a great success.

The cost of building by contract, in 1805, a 74-gun ship was about £36 a ton, just three times what it was a century earlier, and about half what it is to build the corresponding class of up-to-date steel battleship. Some tenders were received in 1804 for building a

seventy-four at £25 per ton, but this was unusually low. The average time occupied in building such a vessel was three and a half years.

Without discussing technicalities any further, there is some interest in noticing that in 1804 they launched a royal yacht for King George, called the *Royal Sovereign*, "with every modern improvement, ship-rigged, and handsomely furnished," just as at the end of the century they have launched a new royal yacht for Queen Victoria. Sliding keels or centre-board vessels, the invention of Captain Schanck, were creating a mild sensation. Lieutenant Grant sailed to survey the Australian coast in the *Lady Nelson*, a little brig of 60 tons, fitted with the new idea.

Modern sailors think they see something comparatively original in the four-masted and five-masted sailing-ships, but in 1799 Richard Hall Gower, of the East India Company, exhibited in London a model of a five-master. The vessel was launched in May of the following year at Itchenor, in Sussex, but after a trial trip her fifth mast was taken out. She was soon after taken up by Government, and appears on the official list of the time as the "*Transit*, four-masted advice boat."

One George Matthews, in 1804, wrote from Wales to the *Naval Chronicle*, suggesting plans for building four-, five-, and six-masted ships, and with his letter enclosed a picture of a five-masted square-rigged ship on the principle of a modern double-ended screw ferry steamer. Mr Matthews explains that he is not a sailor, but he thinks his idea could be carried out. The picture he sent saved the necessity of the explanation.

But a four-masted square-rigged ship was afloat a hundred years ago, and between her and the present-

day four-masted cargo tank, the comparison is all in favour of the former, although the 1801 ship was built by Frenchmen at Bordeaux. The *Naval Chronicle* gives a picture of her in 1804, accompanied by this description :—

“ This is an accurate representation of *L’Invention*, captured by the *Immortalite*, Captain Hotham, off Cape Ortigal, on 27th July 1801. She belonged to Bordeaux, carried 24 long six-pounders, 2 twelve-pounders, and 220 men. . . . Independent of her being as fine a ship of her class as ever was seen for war, she is a great curiosity, being fitted with four masts, at nearly equal distances from each other. The first mainmast, taken from forward, is the largest, the foremast and the second mainmast are nearly of a height, and the mizzen-mast is the shortest of the whole : she has four top-gallant yards, rigged aloft, is a great length, having thirteen ports on each side on a flush deck, and carries her guns very high from the water ; she is a well-equipped ship, and her outfit as a privateer must have been very expensive, as she is finished in a style superior to ships of her description ; she had been launched only three weeks, was on her first cruise, had been eight days at sea, and made no captures.”

All over the world, in every seaport, can be seen some remains of ships built in the small English ship-yards during the first half of the century. Good, honest work was put into them, as the hulls of these ships afloat to-day prove. But, sometimes, owing to the custom of perpetuating names and the confusion arising therefrom, a belief in the age of our old wooden walls is carried a little too far. For example : lying off Hobart is a red-painted powder-hulk belonging to the Tasmanian

Government. On her bows she is named the *Aladdin*, under her stern is painted *Mutine*. On August 1st, 1898, the Tasmanian Government decorated her with flags from stem to stern because it was the centenary of the battle of the Nile, and the brig *La Mutine* brought the first news of the great victory to Naples. To prevent confusion let us call this carrier of Nelson's despatches *Mutine* No. 1. She was formerly *La Mutine*, a French war brig which had been cut out by Hardy (Nelson's Hardy) from Santa Cruz in 1797, and Hardy, then a lieutenant, was given the command of her. In 1803 orders were given for *Mutine* No. 1 to be sold out of the service, and she was purchased in 1807 by Mr David Beatson of Rotherhithe. In 1846 a Mr M'Arthur of Hobart-Town, who was largely interested in whaling, went to England and bought from a well-known London shipowner named Bennett a vessel called the *Aladdin*, which the purchaser was assured was the very same *Mutine* that had carried the Nile despatches. Every one in Tasmania has ever since believed this yarn, as is very natural, unless one has that special knowledge only to be acquired by much study of musty papers and uninteresting books. The Tasmanian Government does not seem to have pursued this study, and so they decorated their powder-hulk, as I have said, and gaily dressed her with flags on the Nile anniversary. But the truth is, *Mutine* No. 1 sold out of the service; *Mutine* No. 2, a brig-rigged sloop of war, was built at Bideford by Tucker in 1806, and duly commissioned, and was at the bombardment of Algiers—then, in 1825, she was condemned and sold out of the service; and *Mutine* No. 3 was built at Plymouth Dockyard as a brig of war in February 1842,

she was condemned and sold to Bennett, the London shipowner, who registered her as the *Aladdin*, and sold her to Mr M'Arthur, her registration being transferred to Hobart in February 1847, and this is the powder-hulk now lying in the Derwent. The name has been perpetuated in the service. *Mutine* No. 4, one of certain famous experimental brigs, was launched at Chatham in 1844, and she was lost four years later; *Mutine* No. 5, a steam sloop of the sixties, took her place, and, by 1870, was sold, to be replaced by *Mutine* No. 6, built at Devonport in 1879, and until recently a harbour service vessel in Southampton waters; and *Mutine* No. 7, an up-to-date triple expansion steel sloop of war, has just been built.

This link-connecting is a fascinating pursuit, but not always interesting, though the story of the seven *Mutines* is here told as showing the danger of growing sentimental over the name of a ship without making sure of her identity; but though *Mutine* No. 3, still afloat, is not the *Mutine*, to the everlasting honour of Plymouth shipwrights, she, though launched 75 years ago, remains a staunch hulk, a living testimony to the honesty of the West Country dockyardmen.

CHAPTER III

OFFICERS AND SEAMEN

The Royal Navy and the Merchant Service—The Press-Gang—
Types of Seamen—Women Sailors.

YARNS of the cockpit are familiar enough to readers of Marryat and Michael Scott ; there is more truth in their fiction than in most history. Here, done in verse in 1804, and if published since, very rarely, is a “complaint” which, as a description of a youngster’s life in the service, will stand good for any period to the sixties, and perhaps is not very far out even at the present time :—

A MIDSHIPMAN’S COMPLAINT.

WHEN in the cockpit all was grim,
And not a mid. dared show his glim,
A youth was all alone ;
He scratched his sconce, surveyed his clothes,
Then took the other cheering dose,
And thus began his moan :—

“ A curse light on that fatal day,
When I from home was led astray,
In this dire hole to dwell ;
If I had in my country staid,
I then had learnt some useful trade,
And scorned the white lappel.

"When first on board the ship I went,
With belly full I was content,
 No sorrow touched my heart ;
I view'd my coat, so flash and new,
My gay cockade and hanger, too,
 And thought me wond'rous smart.

"But soon, too soon, my cash was spent,
My hanger pawn'd, my coat was rent,
 My former friends I missed ;
And when of hardship I complain,
My messmates swear 'tis all in vain,
 And ask what made me, list ?

"Shiv'ring I walk the quarter-deck,
And dread the stern lieutenant's check,
 Who struts the weather side ;
With glass and trumpet in his hand,
He bellows forth his harsh command
 With arrogance and pride.

"But hark ! I hear the caitiff tread ;
Another dose and then to bed,
 Of ev'ry joy bereft."
He shakes his bottle with a flout,
The poor half-pint was quite strain'd out,
 Not one kind drop was left.

The youth with rage indignant burns,
Into his hated hammock turns,
 Alas ! not long to sleep ;
The quartermaster, with hoarse tongue,
Shakes him, and says the bell has rung ;
 He's roused the watch to keep.

Rising, he cries, "Tip us a light,
Old Square-toes, here, how goes the night?"
 "Why, sir, it rains and blows ;"
"O, damn my eyes, I hear the rout !
D'yé spy a stray great-coat about ?"
 Then, swearing, up he goes.

Some letters written in 1818 show how little of exaggeration there was in Marryat's most eccentric character sketches. The writer of the letters is a naval officer, and he is supposed to be addressing a youngster on his first voyage. "I am sorry," writes the naval officer, "the ship's schoolmaster is not the kind of man you can derive any knowledge from, but don't play pranks on him; how can his greasy coat, high cheek bones, and slouched hat affect you?" The modern chaplain and naval instructor would be justly indignant if such an insinuation appeared in print now-a-days about him. But the modern cadet is not expected to be able to set his superiors right on the matter of taking a lunar, as this youngster is encouraged to do. "Your attention to the different methods of working the lunar observations, I hope, is strict and regular. Never for one moment allow yourself to think that because perhaps not more than one or two officers on board your ship are conversant with them that they are of little real service; a few months will convince you how impossible it is to ascertain correctly the situation of the ship without their assistance, particularly when she is not making a direct course, but cruising, as is often the case, in one given latitude and longitude, for weeks together, without seeing the land; and I hope to see the time when no midshipman shall be allowed to pass his examination for a lieutenant unless he fully understands them."

The knowledge of seamanship is still well kept up, but I doubt very much if there could be found many lieutenants to-day handy at splicing a cable, as is required by this injunction:—"You are, I have no doubt, by this time fully acquainted not only with the names,

but the use and direction of every rope in the ship ; and have long since, to use the seaman's term, "paid your footing" in each top ; for it is in the tops, and on the mast-heads, that you must qualify yourself thoroughly to understand the duties of a working seaman : a knowledge absolutely necessary to make yourself respectable as an officer in their eyes. You may be a good disciplinarian, a good navigator in every bearing of the word, know how to rig and work your ship upon scientific principles, and to fight her to the best advantage, for these are the peculiar duties of an officer ; still, unless the seaman thinks that you are equally well acquainted with his minor duties, that in a case of emergency you could take his place on the yard, or assist him in knotting a shroud, or splicing a cable, he would be apt to think lightly of your other qualifications, valuable as they really are, because he finds you deficient in those which come more immediately within the sphere of his own comprehension."

The pay and prospects of youngsters entering the service in 1801 stood thus :—By the rules they were compelled to serve three years before they were entitled to the pay of an able seaman, and they must have been four years in the service before they could be rated as midshipmen, when, if of the highest grade, viz., serving on a flagship, the pay was something less than £30 a year, and mighty lucky was the young man who after four or five years' service had friends enough to find a vacancy for him. A midshipman was compelled to serve six years before he was given a lieutenant's commission, and more often served twelve years, when he was paid 4s. 6d. a day ; a post-captain was paid 8s. a day ; a colonel of a land regiment, 24s. ; a rear-

admiral received when on actual service, 17s. 6d. The whole system of wages was so devised that military officers materially increased their pay by perquisites ; naval officers invariably reduced theirs by penalties imposed upon them by mistakes in the book-keeping of ships' clerks. For example, it was said by an authority that the real emoluments rising from the command of a regiment were underestimated at £1000 a year. In case a captain of a man-o'-war neglected to send every two months a complete muster book of his ship to the Navy Office, the penalty was the forfeiture of his whole wages for the period, trial by court-martial, and dismissal from the service ! Mistakes were punished in this way—not only wilful errors, but involuntary mistakes !

I am afraid, from the court-martial reports in the first quarter of the century, that drunkenness was rather common with naval officers. Reports of it are very frequent, and a naval officer writing just after the conclusion of the war gives some very sad instances of youngsters sent to sea with drunken captains and lieutenants, whose careers were ruined by the vices they learned from their superiors. Here is the description of a captain of a man-o'-war written in 1818 :—

“ Unfortunately for himself, the career of young B— was destined to commence in a small vessel, commanded by a man who had risen from the lowest offices in the ship to his present rank by perseverance alone, unassisted by talent, enterprise, or knowledge of his profession, beyond that which constitutes the mere able seaman. Educated in a merchant ship, and impressed into the service, his knowledge of the hold gave him his first step to the quarter-deck ; length of servitude made him a lieutenant, and the same recommendation, at the

age of sixty, a commander. Such was a merchant seaman raised to the command of a man-o'-war; and such, or nearly such, are too many of those who, suddenly raised, they scarcely know how, above the heads of their former associates, become a pest both to them and to the officers into whose society they are transplanted. Among those who have obtained the higher ranks of the service are certainly some rare exceptions to this censure, but they exist in the persons of men whose talents and enterprise would have distinguished them in any situation; and who have likewise thought it necessary to assume the manners of a gentleman with the rank of an officer."

I hope that this extract makes it clear that this kind of officer was the exception rather than the rule, as were young B—'s messmates thus described:—"A master's mate, who had been second mate of a West India trader, but was impressed in a drunken excursion on shore; and after some time, from his knowledge of stowing the hold, elevated to the quarter-deck; a clerk, who was seldom sober after his twelve o'clock dinner, and two ragged youths who filled the situation of midshipmen."

After three years' service in this vessel, during which his character was formed in such fashion as utterly ruined him, the subject of these extracts was appointed to another ship "commanded by a man who combined, in every respect, the officer and the gentleman; polished in his manners, yet not without that free and open carriage for which our naval officers are in general distinguished, and at the same time thoroughly conversant in everything which regarded his profession."

But the young man was too far gone, and he was soon after dismissed with disgrace, and was lost among the dregs of the population of some seaport town.

One of the current popular ideas about the naval officer of Nelson's time is that he entered the service very frequently through the hawsepipe, and that Smollett's caricature of a captain in the navy held good as a type until a comparatively recent period. Marryat, though, draws an altogether different picture, and however much he might exaggerate, for the fun of the thing, the eccentricities of his types, his knowledge of the service would not permit him to put lower-deck seamen on quarter-decks as commissioned officers, and Marryat's naval officers were the officers of his time, just as Smollett's pictures are types of a century earlier.

In the old navy, flag-officers and post-captains were allowed to enter upon the ship's books a certain number of boys as "servants," but who were really "followers" in that sense in which the word was used not many generations earlier, when knights went to sea with their men-at-arms and other "followers." An officer in command (with modifications), until quite recent times, could take with him to sea his sons or his nephews, or his poor relations' sons, where they could learn their business, and in due course become mates, and lieutenants, having served their apprenticeship much as they would have done in a merchantman if they had been bound to the master instead of to the owner. They could not enter these boys on the ships' books in any of the ordinary ratings, so it became convenient to put them down as "servants." The system was

reformed in 1794, but it was many years later before it was entirely done away with.

Entering the Royal Navy as a "follower" of some naval commander was not the only way to a commission. The Admiralty had provided a legitimate school for breeding officers in the Royal Academy at Portsmouth Dockyard. By the rules of the Academy, sons of noblemen and gentlemen from twelve years to fifteen years of age, and sons of commissioned officers of the fleet from eleven years, were eligible. The headmaster of the Academy was to receive £25 per annum for each boy, and was in return for this sum to find all those things usually supplied at boarding-schools. The instruction was in writing, arithmetic, drawing, navigation, fortification, French, dancing, fencing, and the firelock exercise. Besides these subjects the master-shipwright and boatswain of the yard gave the boys lessons in seamanship, and they went out for occasional trips in the commissioner of the yard's sailing tender. After three years at the Academy the boys were given berths in sea-going ships as vacancies occurred, and were rated as "Volunteers by order," receiving able seamen's pay, and quarters in the midshipmen's berth. Volunteers educated at the Academy were qualified in point of time to serve as lieutenants after six years' service, counting sea-time and school-time, provided two years of that service had been as a mate or a midshipman in a sea-going ship, and they were not under twenty years of age. The Admiralty gave special privileges to, and paid the fees for, sons of poor officers in the navy.

In a first rate, such as the *Victory*, the whole ship's complement would amount to from 900 to 1000 persons,

of whom about 30 were officers. These would be the captain, commander, and seven lieutenants, holding commissions, and then, in order of precedence, would come the "appointed" and "warrant" officers thus:—master, chaplain, surgeon, purser, naval instructor, eight mates, second master, three assistant surgeons, gunner, boatswain, and carpenter.

The system of dividing the officers into "commissioned," "appointed," and "warrant" officers remained until late in the century. Admirals, captains, and lieutenants were the only officers holding commissions, all other ranks were either appointed or warrant officers. To-day all but the gunner, boatswain, and carpenter, who are warrant officers, hold commissions. The masters used to be the highest grade of the warrant branch, they being specially appointed by the Trinity House as competent to take charge of the navigation and pilotage of ships, and it was in this branch of the profession that men *did* occasionally rise from the lower deck, or more often from the position of merchant service officers to the distinction of a commission. Captain Cook is an illustrious example, and Bligh, of *Bounty* mutiny fame, who died a Vice-Admiral in 1817, another.

In the old line of battle ships, the youngsters were called quarter-deck petty officers, and there would be about twenty-four of them on board, including midshipmen, master's assistants, and the purser's clerks. First-class volunteers were young gentlemen who had entered to qualify for commissions, and second-class volunteers those who had entered to qualify for officers of the masters, or civil branches. All these distinctions have now so entirely disappeared, that in the smaller ships

of the present day there is no separate mess for the wardroom and the gunroom, and you will find the pay master's clerk dining at the same table with the first lieutenant.

In the old ship there would be about forty inferior petty officers corresponding to non-commissioned officers in the army. The various grades of these petty officers were bewildering in the number of them. There were admirals' coxswains, captains' coxswains, captains of the tops, captains of the forecastle, yeomen of signals, gunners, boatswains, and carpenters' mates, and any number of others. With the disappearance of sails and rigging, all these distinctions have gone, and there are now chief, second, and third-class petty officers, any of whom may be doing duty as boatswains' mates in one ship, and as gunners' mates in the next; they are in fact sergeants, corporals, and lance-corporals. Besides petty officers, the old line of battle ship's complement was made up of about 500 or 600 seamen, and 60 or 70 seamen boys, 150 marines, with a marine captain and two subalterns.

Officers of the Mercantile Marine, the East India Company's Service excepted, were apprentice boys, and seamen who had been taught the three R's in their youth—a by no means common degree of learning in their walk of life then—and who by industry and sobriety, through the interest of friends, were appointed mates, and so became masters of vessels. There were no Board of Trade examinations, and the knowledge these men had of navigation was very limited. Dead reckoning, the log, chart, and the compass, were, as a rule, the sum of their knowledge.

For example, eighty years ago it was solemnly

discussed in a newspaper correspondence whether a lieutenant of a man-o'-war could take a vessel from the Downs to Spithead without a pilot, and admitted by both parties to the discussion that a navigating officer, *i.e.*, a master of a King's ship, could certainly be more safely entrusted with this great responsibility than masters of merchant vessels or fighting officers of the Royal Navy.

The East India Company's officers were probably the best class of sea-going officers then afloat. The Company's ships carried cargoes too valuable for them to be entrusted to ignorant or drunken commanders and watch keepers, and they sailed in seas that required men of nautical science and seamanlike quality to navigate safely. It was a fighting as well as a carrying service, but it was governed commercially more than politically, so that its ships could not afford to carry one set of officers to navigate and another to fight. So efficient was its system in this respect, that its regulations for the promotion of mates from cadets up to commanders, compelling men to serve stated periods in each rank, in order to gain promotion to a higher, dating from 1793, exact no less from Company's officers than is exacted from merchant service officers by the Board of Trade to-day. But though technically classed as Mercantile Marine, service in the Company's armed cruisers was very different to employment in merchant ships—was, in fact, a branch of the sea life for which there is now-a-days no equivalent. The officers were a superior class of men, and the crews were regularly drilled and well-disciplined. Service in the Company was a career for a youngster, from a social point of view, only a very little below service in the Royal Navy, while the

emoluments of a sea captain of the Hon. East India Company amounted, with the perquisites of an average voyage, to more in one year than the captain of a man-o'-war often earned in a lifetime. And as to the dignity of the rank, when a vessel arrived at her port in India, she was received with a salute of thirteen guns, and the guards at a fort turned out and presented arms to her commander.

The routine of sea duties of naval officers was very much as it is now, excepting, of course, that great difference brought about by the almost total disappearance of sails. Mates, a rank corresponding to the present sub-lieutenant, and midshipmen were divided into watches subordinate to the lieutenants in charge. Then there was a mate under the master in charge of the hold, and another under the first lieutenant who was all day on duty, and whose business it was to superintend the cleaning of the decks and look after the berthing of the crew. The midshipmen under the mates and lieutenants kept division books, saw that the men of their sub-divisions had their hammocks marked and stowed properly, and that their clothes were in good order. Their boat and signal duties are well known to every reader of nautical novels, and we know how in war time a smart youngster often obtained an independent command when his ship had the good fortune to fall in with more prizes than there were lieutenants and mates available for the command of them.

The first lieutenant, when he joined his ship, allotted the men their separate stations, dividing them into two or three watches for sea duty, and four watches for harbour duty. The men were also divided into as

many divisions as there were commissioned officers in the ship. The several stations were laid down upon watch-bills, quarter-bills, station-bills, and a fire-bill, and every one was expected, from these documents, which were hung in some conspicuous place, to know his station. The first lieutenant kept no watch, but having a general supervision over every department of the ship, was busy enough all day to justify his sleeping in all night, provided, of course, all hands were not called. The first thing a first lieutenant did when he came on deck in the early morning was to make sail. Men-o'-war always used to shorten sail at sunset, a custom that many old-fashioned merchant skippers followed till quite recent times. A lieutenant in charge of a watch now paces the bridge, one eye on the compass, the other on the look-out for vessels ; almost his whole duty as a watch-keeper is comprised in watching the steering and keeping clear of collision. This, of course, becomes complicated when manœuvring in a fleet, or keeping station under the eye of an admiral at night, or in thick weather, but in mail steamers or in war vessels going straight from port to port, it should be comparatively easy, except, perhaps, in a fog in the English Channel, when it is as much of a science as cab-driving in Fleet Street in a November fog. But in the old sailing ship, with 7000 yards of canvas to keep full, or the chance of a sudden squall coming upon him unawares, which might take the three top-gallant masts out of the ship, leaving a hideous mass of wrecked spars, torn canvas, and tangle of rigging to bear witness to his slackness, the lieutenant of the watch had indeed to keep his weather eye lifting.

The master of the ship was the pilot and navigator,

as he had been from ancient times, but gradually his importance fell away as the commissioned officers grew more scientific. The Naval Academy by the beginning of the century was bearing fruit, and soon it began to be understood that the captain and lieutenants had joint responsibility with the master for the navigation of the ship, though charts, log, lead, and even canvas, rope, and spars were in the special charge of the master assisted by the boatswain until long after the service had grown familiar with steam.

In the civil departments of the ship at the beginning of the century, the chaplain, surgeon, and purser may be said to rank with the same class of men on shore, but were inferior to them, and vastly inferior to men of the same rank now. Engineers were not officers, but were only of warrant rank until after the Crimean War, and pursers who are now paymasters, were always hucksters and very often rogues—there is more than one instance of them being stood in the pillory. The surgeons did not materially differ from the surgeons of Smollett's time, and the chaplains more often distinguished themselves by their courage in battle than by their piety and good example in the daily life of the ship.

Of the chaplain, by the way, there are certain verses—"The Chaplain's Petition"—to be found in the Annual Register for 1758, reprinted in the *Gentleman's Magazine* in 1796, and again in the *Naval Chronicle* in 1817, of which I can only quote one verse. These verses were a petition from the chaplain to be permitted certain privileges of the wardroom from which he had been excluded, and

which it appears from this verse the cobbler was granted:—

“Ah ! what avails it that in days of yore,
The instructive lashes of the birch I bore,
For four long years with logic stuffed my head,
And feeding thought, went supperless to bed ;
That last enrolled in Alma’s graduate band,
I felt the hallowing load of Hoadly’s hand,
Since you with whom my lot afloat is thrown,
(O sense ! O elegance ! to land unknown !)
Superior reverence to the man refuse,
Who mends your morals, than who mends your shoes.”

The indifference of England to the seamen who fought her battles was shameful, but officers fared no better, unless the monuments to flag officers, erected after their death, is to be taken as a set-off for the heroic service of all ranks. Soon after the peace, hundreds of naval lieutenants—whose brilliant records of services would, nowadays, judged by the way we honour public service, have earned them peerages, Victoria Crosses, and good incomes—were literally left to starve. Mighty lucky was the man who could get the command of a mail packet or a signal station when he was put on half pay. I have before me the recorded services of a lieutenant who was fortunate. This was how he spent his life, and this is how his country rewarded him. Lieutenant Blank entered the service as midshipman and A.B. in 1793, and served in the Channel, North Sea, Ireland, and Jamaica to 1802, when he was promoted lieutenant. From 1802 till 1811 he was continually afloat, serving in the West Indies, Mediterranean and English waters. Then he was given the charge

of a signal station at a wage of 8s. a day and "find himself." His service altogether amounted to twenty-one years and four months, eighteen of those years spent at sea, the remainder on half pay and at the signal station. During this time he was in action about eight times, and was wounded on five occasions. From 1814 to his death he was on the half pay of a commander, and thought himself very well treated in getting 8s. 6d. a day for the remainder of his life when there were any number of equally deserving officers who had served fifty years in the service thankful for less.

The manning of the navy at the beginning of the century is summed up in one word, "Impressment." I think most of us are accustomed to associate the idea of the press-gang with Midshipman Easy and Peter Simple times, but orders to impress are still in existence from at any rate the thirteenth century, and between these King's mandates for impressing ships and men, as given in Sir Nicholas Harris Nicholas's *History of the Royal Navy*, and an Admiralty warrant of impressment I have now before me, there is very little difference. The warrant, after the usual formal preliminaries, sets forth that :—

"We do hereby Impower and Direct you to impress or cause to be impressed so many Seafaring Men and Persons whose Occupations and Callings are to work upon Vessels and Boats upon Rivers as shall be necessary either to Man His Majesty's Ships, giving unto each Man so impressed One Shilling for Prest Money. And in the execution hereof you are to take care that neither yourself nor any Officer authorised by you do demand or receive any Money, Gratuition, Reward, or other Consideration whatsoever for the Sparing, Exchanging or Discharging any Person or Persons impressed or to be impressed, as you

will answer it at your Peril. You are not to entrust any Person with the execution of this Warrant but a Commission Officer and to insert his Name on the other side hereof and set your Hand and Seal thereto. This Warrant to continue in force till the Thirty-First Day of December 1810, and in the due execution thereof all Mayors, Sheriffs, Justices of the Peace, Bailiffs, Constables, Head-boroughs and all other His Majesty's Officers and subjects whom it may concern are hereby required to be aiding and assisting unto you, and those employed by you as they tender His Majesty's Service, and will answer the contrary with their Peril."

This is addressed to the captain of a frigate at Spithead, and is duly signed and counter-signed by the officials of the Admiralty. At the back of the document half-a-dozen lines of type set forth that "I do hereby depute Lieutenant —— under my command to impress seamen," etc., etc., and this is signed by the captain of the frigate.

This particular warrant is dated December 24th, 1809. Picture what sort of Christmas this meant for some Portsmouth families. Does it not make very real that song of Marryat's which Mistress Nancy Corbett of Portsmouth Hard sings:—

"Who ever heard in the service of a frigate made to sail
On Christmas Day, it blowing hard with sleet and snow
and hail?

I wish I had the fishing of your back that is so bent,
I'd use the galley poker hot unto your heart's content.

You've got a roaring fire, I'll bet,
In it your toes are jammed,
Let's give him a piece of our mind, my Bet,
Port Admiral, you be d——d!"

The personal experience of Mr Thomas Urquhart,

an ex-master of a West Indiaman, as told by himself in a pamphlet that attracted considerable notice when it was published in London in 1816, gives an idea of the manner in which these impressment warrants were sometimes executed. Says Mr Urquhart: "I shall mention a circumstance which occurred to myself. While walking in a street in the east of London in the year 1808, in the month of July, about nine o'clock in the evening, with my wife holding by one of my arms, and her sister by the other, I was stopped by a man who demanded who I was, on which I desired to be informed by what authority he dared to ask me that question. I had hardly uttered the words, when I was brutally seized by him and two or three more. My wife received a violent blow on the breast, which compelled her to quit her hold, and laid her up for many weeks."

Mr Urquhart was rescued from the gang by the bystanders, and appealed to the law, but was told that his remedy, if he thought himself ill-treated, was against the impress officer in a civil action. So he went to law and got a verdict for £50, which did not pay even a small proportion of his doctor's bill. Urquhart issued his pamphlet in the form of a letter to Wilberforce, and winds up thus:—"Had a negro slave sustained a similar outrage, and the circumstance had come to your knowledge, would it not have awakened all your indignation, and called forth the strongest powers of your eloquence; the public, inflamed by your means into a sense of the outrage, would have been unable to sleep soundly until they had brought the delinquent to a trial."

In the life of Captain Robert William Eastwick (Unwin 1891) there is a good example of the impress system. Eastwick, when chief officer of a ship lying in the Thames in 1790, went on shore on leave, and was impressed and sent to the *Inconstant* frigate, though legally exempt from impressment. Eastwick offered to produce a substitute, pointing out that as he was the mate of the ship his owners would be seriously inconvenienced. He was only eighteen years of age, and the man-o'-war captain's answer was a demand for two men in exchange, for there was too great need of good men to let such a capable young fellow go in a merchant ship. To do this particular captain justice, however, he made the merchant seaman a master's-mate, and if he had remained in the service, instead of leaving it at the end of the commission, Eastwick might, like Cook, have ended as a post captain.

This violent impressment was as a matter of fact an every-day occurrence, and so remained until the war was over. The papers of the time contain any number of instances of it, and cases are frequently adduced, and officers wrote justifying the practice—stating, in fact, that the only way to man the fleet was to kidnap men in the public streets. Fine old fellows with good conservative ideas, these men! Their successors in the navy fifty years later were writing letters on the madness of introducing steam into the service.

The King's ships were often in such straits for men that "butchers and bakers and candlestick makers" were frequently kidnapped and sent to sea to complete the complements of short-handed ships, and when landsmen were pressed to man warships it may be taken for granted that merchant vessels either went

to sea short-handed, inefficiently manned, or were laid up in the seaports, unable to get men. Yet the mercantile marine flourished, and the ships of the time earned a profit for their owners. But our boys were not encouraged to take to the sea for a profession, if one may judge from the fact that, in the last year of the war, only four boys were apprenticed to the merchant service in the port of London.

The pay of a merchant seaman at this period varied from £3 to £5 per month, and when the navy impressed him the Government paid him £1, 8s. 6d. a month, allowing him to make over to his relatives on shore, to draw while he was at sea, the munificent amount of 14s. 6d. a month out of his 28s. 6d. So that in return for the additional risk to life and limb, and as an encouragement to come forward and fight for his domestic hearth, he was taken by force from his lawful occupation and paid by Government £30 a year less for his services. At the height of the war about 140,000 men were required for the fleet, and of this number it was estimated that 60,000 were pressed men.

The press was not confined to the shore. It was a very common occurrence for a man-o'-war to make a merchant vessel bring to, send a boat and take every likely man off the vessel, leaving her just enough hands to make the nearest port, and this was often done to homeward bound vessels, so that men, after suffering the hardships of a long voyage, looking forward to a run on shore, and to seeing their families, after perhaps a couple of years absence from England, were made prisoners, and as likely as not killed in action or died in a French prison, and their relatives heard no more of them.

After Buonaparte's removal to Elba, a sloop of war that had been engaged in that service went on to India, and when on her way, lying off Madeira, the captain of the sloop sent his boats to two South Seamen lying in the roads, and took nearly all the sailors off them. The masters of the two ships manned their boats with apprentice boys and rowed off to the sloop to beg the captain to leave them, at any rate, enough men to navigate the vessels. On coming alongside the captain hailed the boats, asking what was wanted, and on being told, ordered the apprentices to come on board, and as soon as they were up the ship's side, he cast off the boats and made sail, taking with him the men and boys, and leaving the two merchant skippers in their boats to make their way back as best they could. This man was celebrated in the service as a martinet. On this particular voyage, he had both his lieutenants prisoners at one time, one for six and the other for nine months; one of these officers became so ill through his treatment that he never recovered, and the gunner of the ship actually died through the captain's cruelty.

At this time, as Mr Urquhart reminds us in his pamphlet, we were greatly concerned about the poor slaves in the West Indies.

At the height of the war period the press could not find sailors enough to man our ships, and the Government offered bounties for seamen, often very large sums, and frequently magistrates, instead of committing thieves to gaol, gave them the option of entering on board a King's ship; so that in the same ship could be found poor but respectable men kid-

napped in the streets, highly bribed "bounty men," and the scum of the gaols.

In the beginning of the century, therefore, there was no difference between merchant seamen and men-o'-war's men. A man might be peacefully engaged in the coal trade on the coast one year, and fighting his country's battles under Nelson the next. At the end of the ship's commission, if there were plenty of sailors, he might starve for all the Government would do for him, and he was lucky if he could get back to his collier and die in harness, for hundreds of his shipmates at Copenhagen, at the Nile, and at Trafalgar, were begging for bread in the public streets.

Yet Jack was a happy-go-lucky fellow, not, perhaps, quite such a delightful character as Dibdin's sea songs paint him, but Dibdin's "Tar" and Kipling's "Tommy Atkins" may very well stand together as, if not exactly the real thing, very good types for the great British public to believe in. For example, a newspaper in 1806 reports the death at Portsea of an old salt named Covey; and Dr Duncan, chaplain of the *Venerable*, is responsible for this story of Covey's behaviour at the battle of Camperdown. Covey was brought to the cockpit with both legs shot away, and the surgeon approached him with his implements to trim off the remains of his limbs. "I suppose," said Covey, "those d—d scissors will finish the business of the bullet, master mate?" "Indeed, my brave fellow," said the surgeon, "there is some fear of it." "Well, never mind," cried Covey, "I've lost my legs, to be sure, and mayhap, may lose my life; but we beat the Dutch; d—n me, we have beat the Dutch. This blessed day my legs have been shot off, so I'll even have another cheer for

it, huzza ! huzza !” Covey being no longer of any use for any other purpose, they made a cook of him, and he was serving on board a ship in Portsmouth harbour up to the time of his death. According to Dr Duncan, “he was awful as a swearer, as he afterwards felt and acknowledged, but long before his death, his oaths were turned into praises, and his last words were, Hallelujah ! Hallelujah !”

But a police report of a case at the Guildhall, in which a shoemaker charged a bluejacket with attempting to defraud him of a pair of shoes, reads uncommonly like a scene from Marryat :

Jack being called on for his defence, said :—

“I was paid off from his Majesty’s ship *Northumberland* yesterday, and I came into this London for the first time this morning. I am bound for Bristol, and set sail at three o’clock, in the stage coach for that port. I saw the old man that lubber talks of (pointing to the shoemaker) standing at the corner of a street. I hove-to, and asked him if he could recommend me to a good place to get a good pair of shoes. He took me under his convoy, and brought me to that lubber’s shop. After I had shipped the shoes on me, I offered the old man my old ones that I had unshipped, as a reward for his trouble, which he refused. I had not silver enough to pay for them, and I lugged out of my pocket a parcel of bank-notes, just in this way (putting his hand in his pocket, and producing a parcel of notes rumpled up, as if they were dirty waste paper), some of them for £5, £2, and others for £1. I gave the lubber one of the notes ; he had not change, and handed it to the old man to get change. He made sail, but was not able to keep his reckoning, so as to make the port again. That lubber, thought I, had never doubled Cape Horn. Then the shoemaker asked me to unship the shoes ; I told him I had not been at sea all my life for nothing, and that I was not to be taken aback that way, and insisted on his giving me my change ; on which he said he would send for an officer : that made me contented, as I thought

it was one of his Majesty's officers ; he laughed at me, and said he was a city officer. He behaved very civil to me, and said he would introduce me to your Honour, who was a civil magistrate, and that you would do me justice. I have only one word more to say, which is, that I never saw the old man before I asked him to shape my course to a shoemaker's shop, but if ever I again come across his hawse, and can lay my grappling irons on him, I will have him before your Honour, or some other civil magistrate."

Alderman Thorpe.—"You unfortunately got into bad company."

Jack.—"I do not know what you call it, but this I know, that that lubber wants to bamboozle me out of my note ; he handed it to the old man."

Clerk to the Aldermen.—"The old man called you his son in the complainant's shop, which you did not deny ; and it was natural for him to suppose he was right in giving him the note to get change."

Jack.—"If he did call me his son, I did not hear him ; and if he is my father, it is without my knowledge ; and if I am his son, all I can say is, that I have a d—d old rogue of a father."

Alderman Thorpe.—"I wish you had some person to take care of the rest of your money."

Jack.—"As to the matter of that, I can take care of it myself ; but who would have supposed that the first civil man I spoke to in London should be a rogue. Your Honour won't think I mean any allusions."

Alderman Thorpe.—"I would recommend you to pay the shoemaker for the shoes, and continue your journey to Bristol."

Jack.—"I am bound beyond that, and for twenty years I have been trying to come at the wish of my heart, that is, to see my parents once more, with some money in my pocket. I would have gone to have seen them before, but I could not assist them. I ran away from them fifteen years back, and I suppose they think I have gone to Davey's Locker ; but if ever I reach Kilmacthomas, in the County of Waterford, I will make their old hearts leap with joy, and prove to them that Jack has still a soul to be saved. But I do not think I ought to pay for the shoes again, as the lubber himself gave the pound note to the old rogue."

Alderman Thorpe.—"I honour your intentions, and I trust you

will again see your parents, who will, I am sure, appreciate your good intentions. Do not mistake me ; I did not order you to pay for the shoes, I only recommended it to you ; in fact, I have no power to make such an order."

Jack.—"The officer was right when he told me you were a civil magistrate, and there is no advice you can give me that I will not follow."

Alderman Thorpe.—"I can say no more. Follow the course you have intimated with prudence, and I am sure you will do right, but you must not stop on the road."

Jack.—"Your Honour may depend I will not ; if I could go all the way by sea I would never be out of my latitude ; but those stages bring up so often, it makes seven bells thirty times a day : I will never forget what your Honour has said to me ; and if ever I hear any one speak of a civil magistrate, I will be sure to tell them that they will find one in London. Will your Honour tell me what I am to do with the lubber ?"

Mr Payne.—"He will depend on your honour."

Jack.—"He won't ; he does not know what it is. Will your Honour tell me what to do ?"

Alderman Thorpe.—"I have already told you what I recommend."

One of the Marshal men spoke to Jack, and he turned on him quite in an indignant manner ; "I want none of your advice ; I have had it from a civil magistrate, and here is another pound note, and let the lubber give me change ; at the same time it is d—d hard to pay £1, 12s., for a pair of shoes."

Jack having received his change, said to the Alderman, "I wish your civil Honour was not so far from me, for I should have wished to have shaken flippers with you ; but if ever I come this way again you may depend upon it I will give you a call, and that by my own doing."

In the "good old times" long after the war was over, it was possible for the traveller over Portsdown Hill to meet a sailor riding on horseback, steering his steed by its tail and carrying a boat's anchor slung to his saddle with which to anchor the horse when brought

up abreast of the roadside taverns ; or he might have fallen in with a specially chartered coach with thirty or forty sailors with their girls aboard, riding on every part of the turn-out, from the necks of the horses to the boot of the vehicle, all noisily drunk and all with more money in their pockets (for the few days they would keep it) than in these days of ship savings banks and decent homes could be found on a whole ship's company, and these things were, even well into the second half of the century. I have seen merchant seamen in the seventies come on board for a twelve months' voyage, possessing nothing but the clothes they stood upright in, and these garments absolutely nothing but a canvas jacket and a pair of trousers, I have seen a man in this state finding that by an accident he had still a sovereign in his pocket, throw it on the wharf to be fought for by street arabs.

At the close of the last century, the evils of the advanced note system were so apparent that Parliament made some attempts to remedy them, and amendments of the statutes covering the payment of seamen were passed, and provision made to keep men on full pay when they had been wounded in action, or if declared incurable, to pension them, or take them to Greenwich Hospital. But all the law in the world could not save Jack from the landsharks ; and the Jews on the Hard continued to make fortunes by the sale of gilded watches, until many years later. The mutinies, a few years before the century opened, forced the Government into paying a sailor regularly his shilling a day, putting a stop to the frauds of clerks and pursers, who by ingenious systems of deductions, had hitherto been pocketing twenty-five per cent. of the sailor's earnings, but the

Government could not teach Jack to be careful of his own when he came by it.

All books on the sea are full of stories of Jack and his extravagances, the yarn of Admiral Kempfent and his waistcoat, which is supposed to have happened twenty years before the century opened, might have occurred within the last fifty years. Jack much admired his commanding officer's gold-laced velvet waistcoat, so as soon as the ship reached Portsmouth he made for the Admiral's tailor and ordered a similar garment—“And, hark'ee, you swab, back and front alike, none of your half-cloth, half-velvet dodge.”

Jack got his waistcoat, and looked out for the Admiral, who laughed heartily at his get-up, in tarpaulin hat, canvas trousers, and greasy jumper, flapping open, and displaying the gorgeous undergarment.

“What do ye think of me, yer honour?” says Jack, lifting up the hind part of the jumper. “D—n me, old boy, no false colours, do ye see stem and stern alike, by the Lord.”

When seamen were wanted to complete a vessel's complement, it was, and so remained until past the middle of the century, the custom to post likely seaports with alluring placards. Here is an actual copy of one that was stuck about on the walls of the Thames docks in 1816:—

“Who would enter for a small craft? whilst the *Leander*, the finest and fastest sailing frigate in the world, with a good spar deck overhead to keep you dry, warm, and comfortable; and a lower deck like a barn, where you may play at leap-frog when the hammocks are hung up; has room for 100 active, smart seamen, and a dozen stout lads for royal yard men. This wacking double-banked frigate is fitting at Woolwich to be flagship on the

fine, healthy, full-bellied Halifax station, where you may get a bushel of potatoes for a shilling, a cod-fish for a biscuit, and a glass of boatswain's grog for twopence. The officers' cabins are building on the main deck, on purpose to give every tar a double berth below. Lots of leave on shore ; dancing and fiddling on board ; and 4 lbs. of tobacco served out every month. A few strapping fellows, who would eat an enemy alive, wanted for the admiral's barge. The officers already appointed are Captain Skipsey, late *Maidstone*; Lieutenant J. P. Baker, late *Royal Sovereign*, *Rippon* and *Barham*; H. Walker, late *Courageaux*, and *Menelaus*; J. S. Dixon, late *Caledonia*, and *San Joseph*; A. P. Le Neve, late *Maidstone*; E. A. Haughton, late *St Lawrence*, and *Princess Charlotte* (on the Lakes), who will give every encouragement to their old shipmates. Every good man is almost certain of being made a warrant officer, or getting a snug berth in Halifax dockyard. All brave volunteers whom this may suit must bear a hand, and apply either on board the *Leander*, at Woolwich ; at her rendezvous, the Half Moon and Seven Stars, Ratcliffe Highway, nearly opposite Old Gravel Lane ; on board the *Enterprise*, off the Tower ; or at any other general rendezvous in the kingdom, from whence they will be immediately forwarded to the *Leander*.

God save the King !!

The *Leander*, and a full-bellied station !!!"

It is curious the number of women who took a fancy to the sea in the first years of the century. I came across three different cases reported in as many years. There is what the lawyers would call a leading case—that of Mary Anne Talbot, whose adventures would fill a chapter, and who early in the century was receiving a pension of £20 a year for wounds received in action, when she was before the mast in the navy ; in another instance, Rebecca Anne Johnson was apprenticed by her father to a Whitby collier, and served seven years before, in 1808, her sex was discovered. Her mother had served at sea before

her, and fell, one of a gun's crew, fighting at Copenhagen.

And here, to end the chapter, is the announcement of a wedding in London in which sailors of both sexes were united :—

"At St Dunstane's in the East, in May 1802, David Jones was married to Anne Robinson. They had been old shipmates on board *La Seine*, frigate on the West Indian station during most part of the war, where the lady bore a most conspicuous part in the different actions in which the frigate was engaged. She was always an attendant in the surgeon's department, and waited upon Jones in his wounded state. An attachment took place which ended in their union."

CHAPTER IV

THE SEA LIFE

How Seamen were, and are, Fed, Clothed, and Quartered.

TO-DAY, an officer in the Royal Navy has almost as many separate suits of uniform for his own particular use as would have served to clothe all the commissioned officers in an old line of battle ship. Even the merchant service officer in most companies is now decked out with gold braid enough to have served Howe or Nelson for a full dress uniform, and the less important the line, the more plentiful the gold lace. On this subject I have heard a story:—The owners of a certain steamship company wrote to the Admiralty for permission to decorate the officers of their steamers with epaulets. It is alleged that my lords sent this reply: “By all means we permit your officers to wear epaulets, with this one condition: that they do not wear them on the shoulders.”

Both Marryat and Michael Scott drew pictures of officers and men that give an excellent idea of how very far from uniform was the dress of the service until after the war was over, and the Admiralty began to devote a great deal of attention to questions of gold lace and buttons. Without going into detail, it may be said

that the pictures of groups of officers on quarter-decks—the picture of the scene where Nelson fell on the *Victory*, for example—are accurate enough to give us a good idea of the naval officers' dress early in the century. The senior officers wore three-cornered hats, blue coats with white facings, white breeches, and white waistcoats, and sometimes hessian boots.

The number and pattern of the buttons were the chief distinctive marks, and so remained until well down in the present reign. Now, the familiar crown and anchor is common to all ranks ; it is the only item in the tailoring line that has escaped the attention of the Admiralty during the last few years. But for a generation, or longer, after the dawn of the century, there were elaborate distinctions in buttons. One could, for instance, tell a surgeon by his buttons bearing the seal of the Sick and Hurt Office—a snake curling itself round an anchor ; a master by the seal of the Navy Office—three anchors ; a purser by that of the Victualling Office—two anchors and cables crossed. These warrant officers also wore blue facings in place of white, and the grips of their sword hilts were black ; this last distinction is now confined to the three remaining warrant officers, the gunner, boatswain, and carpenter.

Gold rings on the coat cuffs, the number of rings according to the rank of the officer, a curl distinguishing the executive branch, and a slight strip of red, white, or purple, the three different civil branches, the chief modern distinguishing marks, had their origin more than a hundred years ago, when rear-, vice-, or full admirals were distinguished by one, two, or three rings according to their rank. But for the first quarter of the

century, rank was distinguished chiefly by the epaulet, and the lop-sided idea of one epaulet for officers under the rank of captain, lasted for many years longer. Regulations published in the *Naval Chronicle* in 1807 quote former regulations relating to uniform in 1787, and show no material alterations, except in the matter of epaulets, which were introduced at the request of the naval officers, who complained that while army officers could always be recognised by their epaulets, naval officers were frequently mistaken by military men for petty officers by the absence of this sign of rank.

Some verses published in 1812 refer to the concession, and incidentally tell something of uniform.

“No more shall captain, vain and stern,
Nor flippant army subaltern,
Alone the ‘bullion’ wear.
No more marine subordinate
On deck display the epaulet
The while your shoulders bare.

No more shall merchant skipper dare
Your button late usurped to wear
Now more respected grown.
That button, late an anchor plain,
The regal crown surmounts again
To prove you the King’s own.”

The poet goes on to sing of “Slashed sleeve and epaulet, trim cock’d hat with neat rosette,” and to wish “each luff” success with his epaulet, and speedy promotion to a pair of them.

I think the present white lappel on midshipmen’s collars, which irreverent youngsters have called the “mark of the beast,” is about the oldest unaltered dis-

tinction mark in the service. William IV. took a fancy to dress executive officers with red facings on their uniforms, but the Admiralty soon came back to white, and it has not since been altered, the only bit of red nowadays is the distinction mark on the surgeon's sleeves, and the red velvet in the crown of a cap badge. For executive officers the swords were much as they are now, but for the civil branches of the service there was a sensible regulation by which this branch wore dress swords with rapier blades, the kind of weapon worn now by the diplomatic service, and stage kings and courtiers.

The marines supplied the colour, their red coats and white cross-belts made the quarter-deck look uniform. A set of regulations for 1805 lays down that "the marines are to be paraded every morning at ten o'clock when the men's hair is to be well tied and clubbed, their faces and hands washed, and shoes cleaned. They are to have clean shirts on Sundays and Thursdays. A guard is to be ready every morning at half-past eight, when the men are in every respect to be well-dressed, their great-coats neatly rolled and well slung, and their arms and accoutrements in high order and well-appointed."

This was written by an officer in 1818 :—

"A blood is known by his costume, for an attention to the regulated uniform is wholly beneath his notice, with a surtout to hide the coat he disgraces, a round hat, and a formidable cudgel in his hand, he is equipped for the field; and with the assistance of as much port as he can conveniently carry, is fully prepared, either to attack or defend any one so that it leads to a row. The naval uniform is by no means inelegant, but even

if it were so, no individual is authorised to alter it, or introduce innovations in his own person; if it has a fault, it is that of not being sufficiently marked; this is particularly exemplified in the side-arms worn in the service, to say nothing of the infinite variety of belts to which they are attached; you will see one tied to a sword as long as himself, another with a dirk so small, you would swear it had been some bodkin purloined from a lady's head; and not one officer in twenty wearing the sword appointed for him by the regulations of the service. Custom has sanctioned wearing the dirk in lieu of the sword on ordinary duty; the latter, in a small boat, being frequently found an awkward encumbrance; but it was never contemplated such fantastic articles would be introduced, as may now be seen stuck to the sides of our young officers, of all shapes and sizes; nay, some are so peaceably inclined, that their side-arms were never made to draw, but consist merely of a hilt stuck to an ornamented scabbard. The dirk or dagger has frequently been found a formidable weapon in boarding, when carried in the left hand, and may be used as a weapon both of offence and defence; for if laid back along the arm, a blow might be received upon it which could not other ways be warded; were this weapon, therefore, officially sanctioned and directed to be worn not as an apology, but an appendage to the sword, and its length regulated together with a sling or knot, to prevent its being lost from the hand on service, it would at once put an end to the ridiculous toys at present worn under the name of side-arms, form a handsome addition to the uniform, inform our young men of its real use, and, placed in the front of the sword belt, might be allowed

(as it is at present) to be worn on ordinary duty, instead of the more cumbrous sword, while on real service both would be found useful; thus one belt only would be necessary for the sword and dirk which might be regulated both as to breadth and ornament."

When the Queen came to the throne, the dress regulations were pretty clear and not unlike what they are now, except that an undress and a full-dress uniform were considered variety sufficient for an officer. As to the seamen, it was not until 1851 that uniform for them was established, and the men of Nelson's time, as can be seen from the pictures, decked themselves as their fancy pleased them. But the sea has a way of teaching men how to clothe themselves sensibly, and Jack, because the wind would blow away an awkwardly shaped hat, soon took to wearing caps, and because he wanted freedom in his limbs, to loose trousers, and for ease in his feet, high-lows, or "purser's crabs," as the low shoes were called. Pigtails were, of course, the mode when the century opened, but soon went out, except with the marines, who, being more than half soldiers, and not having to go aloft and lay out on yards, kept up their military stiffness.

There are some remarkable examples of how lax, or rather, how entirely absent, were dress regulations in the dress of Royal Naval seamen. A famous sporting admiral, I have been assured by an officer who sailed with him, selected his crew for their physical and fist-cuff capabilities: his boat's crew could, as a schoolboy would put it, "whop" any other men in the ship's company, and the coxswain of his gig could "whop" the gig's crew, and the midshipmen of the boat could lick

any other youngster in the gun-room. These men were dressed in a fancy rig composed of the gallant officer's racing colours. While another well-known similar case is that of the *Harlequin's* gig's crew, a sloop of war of Crimean war time, who were all dressed as harlequins.

The dress of seamen down to the establishment of uniform was by reason of their own common sense, generally blue jacket, white duck trousers, and tarpaulin hat ; men in the tropics soon learnt the value of the straw hat and so took to wearing it, while those in the Channel stuck to the warm flannel and fear-nought petticoats of their father's time. Soft cloth and knitted caps, common to merchant seamen, then, as now, do not seem to have been general in the navy, and so, I infer, men on King's ships went aloft and jammed their hats so hard upon their heads as not to lose them. Seadandies wore striped shirts, and decorated their pantaloons with little tags of canvas, as costers do their garments with pearl buttons.

In the Royal Navy during the last half of the century, the food of the seamen has been vastly improved, but I do not think the bluejacket's quarters are as comfortable as they were in the old days. The old line of battle ship was not crowded with a thousand men on board as is the modern ship with fewer men. Men could find a quiet corner somewhere on her, that is, of course, when the hammocks were stowed, but at night the men's deck, then, as now, was closely packed. The hammocks were slung in parallel rows fore and aft the ship, right from one side of her to the other, the rows being only fourteen inches apart, leaving no passage between them unless a man stooped

or pushed them apart with his shoulders. Readers of Smollett will remember what unpleasant adventure befell Roderick Random when he went to attend a sick man, and got jammed between two hammocks.

Evidence on the state of the Mercantile Marine given before a Royal Commission in 1853, shows how our merchant seamen were quartered. A witness on the subject said :—

" In British ships the men are not treated as they ought to be. I have taken particular notice of their place of abode, which is on almost every ship of small size, a small dark cave, without light or warmth, or not such a kind of place wherein they may rest and repose themselves ; and in point of size it is sometimes six or seven feet square, for six or seven men, stowed half-full of rope and sails, damp and wet. The very small accommodation the poor men have in bad weather, completely enervates them ; they are thus rendered unable to perform their duty, and shipwrecks follow from the inability of the men. I went into the forecastle of ten different ships and measured them, and I have the measure here. There was no proper accommodation where they could stretch themselves out, there was room for the hammocks, but in several of them there was no skylight, and if they shut the hatches of the forecastle, there was no air and no light. I also consider that the want of accommodation in the forecastle of the ship may be one of the causes of intemperance, because if the men have no place to repose themselves in a seaport after arriving at the port, the men are compelled to go to a public house, and thus become intemperate. Comparing them with foreign ships, the contrast is most obvious. There is ample space for

every foreign seaman ; they have box-beds (standing, or fixed bed-places, which our large ships also have), and uniformly a painted cabin for the seamen. They can sit round the fire and talk and read, and amuse themselves, and they have a place of repose whenever they retire from their work ; but in nine-tenths of smaller British ships it is quite the contrary ; indeed, I have the particulars here of the various sizes of different fore-castles ; I believe there was only one in ten vessels that I measured that was painted ; the others were all bare wood. This is a serious reflection on the shipowner, and should be remedied. There is such heartlessness in consigning human beings to the dog-holes that are but too often appropriated to the use of seamen, as to create much surprise in those who are not aware of what an absorbing principle the love of gain is. There is one thing that has been pointed out to me frequently by shipmasters, namely : the insufficiency of the crews in number ; the present proportions may be said to be from 100 to 150 (tons) six ; from 150 to 200, eight ; from 200 to 250, ten. Now, I do not say that these proportions exist in all shipping ; but that they do exist frequently, I know ; whereas it is thought the proportion ought to be at least a fifth or sixth more, namely : from 100 to 150, eight ; 150 to 200, ten ; 200 to 250, twelve. Of course I am not speaking dictatorially ; I am only saying what a proper marine board ought to have the power of fixing."

The food on board men-of-war has vastly improved in quality and quantity, and Jack is now given facilities to add to his dietary scale by the purchase of little luxuries. The messes by clubbing their money, and a judicious expenditure of a small amount, can con-

siderably improve on the regulation allowance, although there is very little to growl at in the Government rations, and trained cooks in place of worn-out old sailors now make the food palatable. By one of the many Acts of Parliament passed for the benefit of seamen, the merchant shipowner was compelled to give sailors certain rations, and I know that in very many ships this "pound and pint" law has resulted in the men being infinitely worse fed. Biscuit and salt beef one day, biscuit and salt pork the next, peas, oatmeal, beer or wine, or rum, flour, and vinegar, were, and (omitting the beer and wine) still are, the principal rations. The water is the only ration that has improved in quality, for before the twenties, the water carried in wooden casks was sometimes very foul drinking, and the ration was very small, a couple of quarts a day, instead of three quarts as at present, being the quantity usually allowed.

"Cracker hash" and "dandyfunk" are names of food messes now made by sailors, the first from biscuits steeped in water and mixed with pork fat; the second, biscuits mixed with molasses; sensible sailors, when the meat is very bad, contrive to disguise some of its vileness by thus mixing it. Not twenty years ago I was in a ship, that, owing to the bad meat on board had nearly all her crew ill with scurvy, and the few who escaped owed their immunity to "cracker hash." There was, and is, no other reason for an outbreak of scurvy but the neglect and meanness of owners and shipmasters. Some of the men died on this voyage of a year's duration, from a disease that Captain Cook contrived to avoid in all his long voyages. I am happy to say the captain got heavily fined, and the owners long

since became bankrupt and no longer send ships to sea.

One method of husbanding water forty or fifty years ago, has been described to me at different times by old men-o'-war's men. The men's drinking allowance for the day was put in a scuttle-butt, such as most of us have seen in small coasters. To obtain a drink it was necessary to use the dipper, a long, narrow, tin cup, the only vessel that would fit the bung-hole of the cask. This dipper was kept at the main royal-mast-head, and any one who wanted a drink had to climb the rigging, bring down the cup, take his drink and return the dipper to its place aloft. A sentry was put over the cask to see that this double journey was performed for each drink, and it may be taken for granted that, even on a hot day in the tropics, men did not quench their thirst very often—between parched lips, and a double run up and down to the main-truck of a seventy-four, there was not much to choose.

I believe the stories that are told of men carving tobacco boxes out of their allowance of beef. I have seen beef that could be used for this purpose, and that shore people could not have detected from wood ; and I have seen biscuits that could not be broken without the use of an implement such as a hammer or the thick end of a marlinespike. This kind of bread is good ; it is too hard to harbour vermin. I have seen it printed somewhere that a distinguished naturalist has said that the yarns of sailors about weevily biscuits are untrue, that no insect of the kind gets into sea biscuits. If that naturalist had ever been to sea in a ship where the softer quality of biscuit was in the stores, he would have obtained an ounce weight of experience out of

every biscuit, that would have for ever knocked the bottom out of his theorising. Not once but a hundred times have I seen men skim the maggots in spoonfuls from the tea in which their biscuits were soaked. But I think the worst form of food on shipboard is the pork, sometimes still so vile that I have in recent years seen the hardest old shellbacks retch violently at the smell of it cooking in the galley. Men use the fat of it in slush lamps instead of oil in places where the shipowner is too mean to supply the crew with enough lamp oil, and the smell of the lamp in the forecastle is so bad that it is only lit when absolutely necessary.

The bill of fare in harbour is often roast beef and boiled potatoes and soup. It sounds good, but the soup is just greasy, hot water, in which a few bones have been boiled for two or three days, and this mess is strengthened by boiling the joints in it. When certain of the joints are about half-cooked, they are taken out of the great copper and baked brown in the galley oven—thus is the sailor supplied with his roast and boiled. The potatoes, it may be depended upon, are of the worst possible quality, and are served in their skins, about two to each man. The food is served in a disgusting fashion in small, wooden tubs or mess “kids,” the meat and vegetables huddled together in one, the soup in another. At sea, a tub of peasoup and a tub of meat one day; soft bread, viz., the sailor’s allowance of flour made up into rolls, and beef, the next. The allowance for a watch is dumped into a tub, and each man cuts off his “whack” with his jack-knife.

Of course all merchant ships are not alike, and on steamers, particularly on the better class of them,

the food is very good indeed. It comes cheaper to feed the crew on fresh food than on the Act of Parliament rations on board such steamers, but on many of the sailing ships lying in foreign seaports, a visitor can easily see for himself how atrociously the crew are lodged and fed. Of course, when the ship has been some days in port, the salt meat disappears, but a day after entering port, before the harness-casks are cleaned, as they call the tubs in which the ration for a period is kept, a visitor can see and smell the quality of the meat. But this experience is as nothing to what it would be if landsmen could visit the ship when she is lying becalmed on the equator. Then the steep-tub, in which the meat is soaked all night in salt water before being boiled next day in salt water, gives forth an odour that would betray the sailing-ship's vicinity to the passengers on a mail-boat, when the vessels were hull down to each other. In such ships, with such accommodation and such food, parents are still foolish enough to pay premiums to have their sons apprenticed. The boys are supposed to be separately lodged from the seamen, and to be taught the trade of the sea with a view to their becoming officers. As a matter of fact they are lodged in a house on deck, very often more uncomfortable than the forecastle, and in company no better than that of the seamen, and they are taught nothing. What little they learn is picked up by chance, and because, though their masters chiefly employ them in polishing brass-work and cleaning pigsties, the ships are now so short-handed that the seamen in the forecastle take

care to make the apprentices do as much work as possible.

The monotony of the sea life, in peace or in war, in trading-vessel or in warship, in the beginning or at the end of the century, can be little understood by shore-going folk. Readers of sea-books are told of the weariness of that time, when we were blockading the French ports, but a chapter or two describing an action dispels the impression, and we think only of the drum beating to quarters and of all the excitement of battle. But the routine life on a man-o'-war in the old days was the dullest life it is possible to imagine. Often as ships were in battle, there were many ships, and there were not battles enough to go round, even though the fighting had been evenly distributed, which it was not. The modern fighting ship is even duller, and certainly no one who wants change ought to take to the sea now, any more than then.

The nine hundred or a thousand persons on an old line of battle ship were every day employed doing the same thing that they were doing the day before. The excitement of beating to quarters must have been a welcome change to the dullness of cruising. When the order "Clear ship for action" was given, the boatswain's whistle sounded shrilly at the hatchways, and the boatswain's mates hoarsely cried, "Clear lower deck, up all hammocks." Every sailor ran to his hammock, and in it stowed his bedding in a neat roll, and passed the lashing round it—the art of passing a hammock-lashing properly is still one of the first technicalities taught to seaman boys. The hammocks were then carried to

the upper deck and stowed by the quarter-masters in the hammock nettings—a double network supported by iron stanchions running along each side of the ship from the forecastle to the poop—and, thus arranged, the seamen's beds made an excellent barrier against shot. Meanwhile parties of men were rigging preventer braces, slings, and so on, upon the yards, so that should the ordinary gear be carried away by the fire of the enemy, the spars would not come tumbling down on deck, entangling the men in piles of torn canvas, fathoms of rigging, and débris of splintered wood. The carpenter and his crew prepared plugs to stop shot holes in the ship's hull, and got upon deck spare gear for the chain-pumps in case they should be injured in the engagement. The gunner and his mates saw that the guns were clear and ready for use, opened the magazine and stationed men in it to pass along the charges, and saw that plenty of cartridges were ready filled. The master and his mates took charge of the sail-trimming and steering, prepared to make or shorten sail, and brace the yards under the orders of the captain; and the lieutenants, according to their number and the size of the ship, took charge each of a deck or battery, and generally supervised. This was the exciting break in the routine, and is the same to-day, except that engineers and stokers have taken the place of sail-trimmers; and torpedo nets, searchlights and such gear have to be manipulated in addition to the guns. But the regular round now is paint-work cleaning, and, apparently, for some reason best known to the authorities, comparatively little drill, considering how important drill is.

In the old days, trimming the sails, pulling the yards first this way, then that, to catch the breeze, what is known to seamen as "pulley-hauley," in light, variable winds was, and is, only comparable to the treadmill, and when a man-o'-war was keeping her station, this kind of work was going on continually night and day. There was very little drill, the cutlass exercise was not even taught until the teens of the century, and great gun exercise was too often looked upon by captains as a waste of time. Serving out provisions and water, getting the salt beef and pork from the hold, bringing the casks on deck to renew the brine pickle and restoring them to the hold, weighing the meat and steeping it, serving out slop clothes, overhauling men's kits, and keeping the ship clean, all occupied much time when 500 to 1000 men were crowded together in a confined space, and with the frequent interruptions of "All hands about ship," or shorten sail or make sail, with the endless round of rope-making, spun-yarn twisting, setting up rigging, rope-splicing, and knotting, and making of chafing gear, there was not much idle time on the sailing ship. In the days of studdingsails and of cracking on to overhaul a possible prize, the carrying away of spars from the press of canvas, and the loss of canvas when the spars went by the board, gave plenty of work to carpenters and sailmakers; and wooding and watering, two words now almost obsolete, in the days of oak and hemp, took just that place in the routine of ships as coaling does in steel and steam. It was then that men learnt how to handle a boat, a branch of the profession in merchant ships, now fast becoming a lost art—the average deep-

water merchant seaman cannot pull a boat properly, and though in the navy the sailor is taught to sail and row, steam cutters and pinnaces are continually in use, and their use increasing, makes it less and less important for sailors to remember the teaching of the training-ship.

CHAPTER V

NAVAL ENGAGEMENTS

The French War Period—How our Merchantmen Fought—The South Seamen—The Crimea—Modern Affairs.

WHEN the eighteenth century went out and the new one came in England's greatest naval warriors were in the fullness of their glory. During 1800 there were enough brilliant frigate and boat actions fought to fill a book with the story of them. It was in that year that Cochrane played such havoc on the Spanish coast in the little *Speedy*, whose broadside of 28 lbs. Cochrane used to say he could carry in his coat pockets. Most Englishmen remember the action in May with the Spanish frigate, whose broadside was 190 lbs. Cochrane's little brig could not stand up against a weight of metal like this, and so he laid her alongside the Spaniard, and then boarded with every officer and man, leaving only the surgeon to look after the *Speedy*. When the Spaniards were driven below and the casualties were counted, only 44 British were left unwounded to guard the 260 Spanish prisoners, but Cochrane managed, nevertheless, to take his brig and her prize into Port Mahon.

On April 2nd, 1801, came Copenhagen. When we

have forgotten the exact cause of the quarrel with the Danes, when the number of ships engaged, their names and every other detail shall have so passed from our minds, that we shall have to refer to one of the thousand or more books on the subject to see what it was all about, the fact that Nelson won the battle by his courage to disobey, when disobedience was generalship, will still be fresh in our memories.

"The signal of recall is hoisted on the flagship."

"Is our signal for close action still hoisted?"

"Mind you keep it so."

Pacing the deck, moving the stump of his lost arm in a manner which with him always indicated great emotion, Nelson presently said :—

"Leave off action now! Damn me if I do! You know, Foley," turning to the captain, "I have only one eye, and I have a right to be blind sometimes;" and then putting his glass to his blind eye in that mood which sports with bitterness, he said, "I really do not see the signal!" Presently he exclaimed, "Keep my signal for close action flying! That is the way I answer such signals. Nail mine to the mast."

Admiral Sir Hyde Parker, there is no doubt, hoisted the signal from chivalrous motives. The fire, he said, was too hot for Nelson to oppose, a retreat he thought must be made. He was aware of the consequences to his own personal reputation, but it would be cowardly in him to leave Nelson to bear the whole shame of the failure, if shame it should be deemed. But Nelson won the battle, and we only half remember the Commander-in-chief, or Graves, the Rear-Admiral, who nobly supported Nelson, and, like him, refused to see the signal.

Then the message to the Danes and the sealing of the letter is another of the personal incidents by which Copenhagen is remembered:—

“The brave Danes are the brothers and should never be the enemies of England,” sealing the letter with wax and not with the proffered wafer, “for this is not the time to appear hurried or informal.”

There was one of Nelson’s captains at Copenhagen who is remembered to-day by some people in that portion of Greater Britain, then the newly-made convict settlement at Botany Bay. This was Edward Riou, who in 1789 encountered shipwreck in the *Guardian*, taking stores to the new settlement. Those who saw the ship successfully navigated to the Cape, after running upon an iceberg, described Riou as having achieved “the most wonderfully heroic act ever performed.” There is a monument in St Paul’s to Riou, who died thus: Unwillingly he was drawing off his ship, the *Amazon*, from under the guns of the Trekroner Battery, having seen the Commander-in-chief’s signal of recall. “What will Nelson think of us!” he said sorrowfully. The blood was then streaming from a wound in his head, and as his ship came round, exposing her stern to the fire of the battery, a round shot came on board and cut him in two. Nelson said “what he thought of us” when he wrote his despatch and told of the loss of the “good and gallant Riou.”

Bligh, too, was there, gallantly fighting his ship, the *Glatton*, little dreaming then that he would be forgotten for this, and only remembered for the *Bounty* mutiny, or in connection with some lying statement traducing his personal courage. “Bligh, I thank you, you have supported me nobly,” said Nelson.

A year later the Treaty of Amiens was signed, and we reckoned up the cost to ourselves and to our enemies. The loss to our enemies in ships, taken, lost, or destroyed, stood thus :—

		French	Dutch	Spanish	Total
Ships of the line	.	45	25	11	81
Fifty-gun ships	.	2	1	0	3
Frigates	.	133	31	20	184
Sloops and smaller vessels	.	161	32	55	248
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We had lost 20 ships of the line, 145 frigates and smaller vessels, and of this number only 42 vessels were captured, and 9 destroyed by our enemies, the rest had been burned, wrecked, or foundered at sea.

War broke out again in the spring of 1803, and until Trafalgar, Buonaparte was getting ready his invasion flotilla, 150,000 men, 2300 vessels, and six hours command of the channel were all the conditions he wanted to make a success of it. The last condition was the only one that prevented the landing. A noteworthy event in this connection was Lord Keith's "Catamaran expedition, designed to destroy the flotilla assembled at Boulogne to invade England." Copper vessels containing combustibles were arranged to explode in a given time by clockwork, and were to be towed into position under the enemy's ships by one-man catamarans or small canoes, the attack to be made under a heavy fire, and to be aided by fire-ships. This was the state of torpedo warfare at the beginning of the century, and the expedition ended as feebly as might be expected from the weapons employed. No damage

was done to the French ships, and our fleet went home again, to be laughed at.

The capture of the Spanish treasure ships with £100,000 on board them, in October 1804, made an open enemy of the Spaniards, and this and Sir Robert Calder's action in July 1805 were the two principal naval battles previous to Trafalgar, but between these events, John Company distinguished itself—the home-ward bound China fleet engaged, and beat a French squadron under Admiral Linois. This action more than any during the century illustrates how our sea battles were fought by British sailors in the general sense of the word, and how little distinction there was between men-o'-war's men and merchant seamen. Even Marryat, in *Newton Forster*, makes an old Greenwich pensioner say of the battle, "I've worked my way clean through the whole yarn, and I seed the report of killed and wounded, and I'll take my affi-davy that there warn't an ossifer of the whole fleet as lost the number of his mess in that theer action, and a clipping affair it was! Only think of the moun-seer a-tarning tail to marchant vessels! Damn my old buttons! What will our jolly fellows do next?" Now, though the affair is one of the most creditable in our history, it is scarcely just to the French to write of Linois running away from merchant vessels, and as we have everything to gain by the truth, it is a pity to exaggerate.

The want of an intelligence department at home enabled Linois to leave Batavia with his flagship the *Marengo*, 80 guns, *Belle Poule*, 40, *Semillante*, 36, *Berceau*, 22, and the 16-gun brig *Aventurier*, the French admiral calculating on the capture of the East India fleet in the China Sea.

Nathaniel Dance commanded the East India ships. The Company's armed cruisers and merchantmen numbered 16, mounting from 30 to 36 guns; each vessel had a great many Lascar seamen on board; there were also Europeans, numbering on the average 100 to each vessel. Besides the 16 large ships, there were about a dozen smaller merchantmen.

Linois fell in with the English ships off the Straits of Malacca, and when Commodore Dance sighted the French squadron at eight o'clock on the morning of February 14th, finding by sunset, that the French ships were rapidly overhauling him, he decided to offer them battle, but the Frenchmen then kept away. The next morning at nine, Dance put his ships again on their course under easy sail. The rest of the story is thus told in his despatch:—"The enemy then filled their sails, and edged towards us. At 1 P.M., finding they proposed to attack and endeavour to cut off our rear, I made the signal to attack and bear down upon him, and engage in succession, the *Royal George* being the leading ship, the *Ganges* next, then the *Earl Camden*. This manœuvre was correctly performed, and we stood towards him under a press of sail. The enemy then formed in a very close line, and opened their fire on the headmost ships, which was not returned by us till we approached him nearer. The *Royal George* bore the brunt of the action, and got as near the enemy as he would permit him; and the *Ganges* and *Earl Camden* opened their fire as soon as their guns could have effect; but before any other ship could get into action, the enemy hauled their wind, and stood away to the eastward under all the sail they could set. At 2 P.M. I made the signal for a general chase, and we

pursued them till 4 P.M., when, fearing a longer pursuit would carry us too far from the mouth of the Straits, and considering the immense property at stake, I made the signal to tack, and at 8 P.M. we anchored in a situation to proceed for the entrance of the Straits in the morning. As long as we could distinguish the enemy, we perceived him steering to the eastward under a press of sail. The *Royal George* had one man killed, and another wounded, many shot in her hull, and more in her sails, but few shots touched either the *Camden* or the *Ganges*, and the fire of the enemy seemed to be ill-directed, his shot either falling short or passing over us."

Flinders on his way to England in the *Porpoise* was wrecked on the Barrier Reef on the Australian coast, the *Cato*, another vessel accompanying the *Porpoise*, also coming to grief. The crews of these two ships having made their way to the East Indies were on the voyage to England in this East India fleet, and helped to beat the Frenchmen. Young Franklin, afterwards Sir John, was among the officers, and acting as signal midshipman on the *Lord Camden*, he made the signal to engage. Flinders was not there; he had tried to reach England in a little colonial-built schooner, and putting into Madagascar, had been taken prisoner by Du Caen, but that is another story.*

Without in the least detracting from the gallantry of the Englishmen, which was gratefully recognised at home, Dance being knighted, and all hands receiving a money grant from the Company, it is apparent that sixteen ships, each armed with from 30 to 36 guns, and

* *Naval Pioneers of Australia.* Becke & Jeffery, John Murray, 1899.

with crews well accustomed to the use of them, was not such a very weak force against four vessels, only one of which was of a very superior force to the Englishmen. Even now, when a man-o'-war's man's trade is altogether different to a merchant seaman's, we may possibly hear of some case in the future not altogether dissimilar. But the 80-gun ship of Linois had not longer range guns or weightier projectiles than her opponents, she had only more guns. The modern ship may actually have fewer guns than any one of a fleet of modern armed merchantmen, but one shot from the battleship's big weapon, if truly aimed, would effectually settle the business of a cruiser.

Frigate and boat actions went on just as regularly as the days of the week came round, and the *Naval Chronicle* contains hundreds of Gazette letters telling of them. And we were fighting everywhere, West and East Indies, Mediterranean, and English Channel. At last, in October 1805, came Trafalgar. The *Victory*, with every stitch of canvas set, bearing down upon the enemy; Nelson's prayer and his last petition to his King and country, the famous signal; "England expects every man will do his duty"—these preliminaries of the great battle will never be forgotten while the English language lives. But it is the tragical ending of the day that men think of most. Those three hours and a quarter in the grim death-chamber where, surrounded by wounded, Nelson lay dying, his last words in two sentences expressing all that has ever been written of the private littleness and the public greatness of his life: "Remember that I leave Lady Hamilton and my daughter Horatia as a

legacy to my country. Thank God, I have done my duty."

Trafalgar, though the last great naval battle, was by no means the end of the fighting ; frigate actions and small sea-fights were still frequent enough, and Cochrane, fresh from his release from a French prison, in the 38-gun frigate *Pallas*, made, in the year 1806, a chapter of war history of his own.

In 1808, we were fighting the Russians, the Turks, and the Danes, while the French still kept our navy on the alert, right up to the eve of Waterloo. The war with America broke out in 1812, the main cause of it being our assertion of the right to search American ships for deserters, driven to the crime by our own neglect and ill-treatment of them. The actions were nearly all fought between single ships, or small squadrons, and there is no doubt that our ships were outclassed by the Americans, and that their best gunners were the men who had fought on our side at the Nile, at Copenhagen, and at Trafalgar ; it was even asserted that among the seamen on one of the American ships were some of the crew of Nelson's barge, and certainly 5000 English deserters were known to be in the American Navy when the war broke out.

Our one great success was in the action between the *Shannon* and the *Chesapeake*. The details of that engagement have been discussed and argued about more times in English and American books and magazines, than any other battle that was ever fought. It will be remembered that Captain Broke being severely wounded, and the first lieutenant killed, the second lieutenant brought the victorious *Shannon* out of action, and sailed her and her prize to Halifax. This officer was Admiral

of the Fleet, Provo Wallis, who died so recently as 1892, in a Hampshire village, close to a spot where the blood-stained timbers of the *Chesapeake* can still be seen. After the battle she was sailed to Portsmouth, and there sold for £500 to a shipbreaker. Her timbers were distributed, and a great part of them bought by a builder, who built them into a flour-mill at Wickham, 9 miles from Portsmouth. The floors of that mill still show the stains of the fight, and the beams that support the floor-boards are full of shot holes.

Not so well remembered are the circumstances of our last sea-fight with the French, fought in the Mediterranean on the eve of Waterloo, between the 18-gun English brig of war *Pilot* and the 22-gun French frigate *La Legere*. Captain John Toup Nicholas, the commander of the *Pilot*, in his despatch thus describes the fight :—

“ At daylight, on the 17th June 1815, a frigate was observed which, from not answering our signals, I concluded to be an enemy. I approached her until I could see her waterline from the deck, then, having ascertained that she had only twelve ports of a side on the main deck, I thought she was not more than a match for the *Pilot*, consequently did my best to get alongside of her. At two in the afternoon, the stranger having taken in all his small sails, and apparently prepared for action, he hauled towards us and fired a gun to windward, hoisting a tri-coloured pendant and ensign. Half-an-hour later, after some manœuvring on both sides to endeavour to gain the weather gage, I placed the *Pilot* close on his weather beam, and hoisted our colours. Observing that he was preparing to make sail to pass us, and an officer having hailed in a menacing tone,

desiring me ‘to keep further from him,’ and his people continuing to train their guns at us, I ordered a shot to be fired through his foresail to stop his progress. The flash of our gun proved the signal for the general discharge of his broadside. The action then commenced within pistol range. Our shot being from the lee-guns, and directed low, evidently striking his hull in quick succession, and his disabling our rigging greatly. By four o’clock the fire of our opponents had slackened considerably, and I sanguinely looked and expected every instant to see the tri-coloured ensign hauled down. After two hours he hauled up his mainsail, and backed his mizzentopsail in order to drop astern. I endeavoured to shorten sail also, to retain our position on his beam, but I found every brace, bowline, and clue-garnet cut away. We thus unavoidably ran ahead of him, and as the only alternative I then put the helm up to rake his bows, of which he took the immediate advantage by hauling close to the wind, and making off with all the sail he could carry. With deep regret I saw that I had it not in my power to follow him immediately, the yards being wholly unmanageable, the main topgallant mast over the side, the main topsail yard shot away in the slings, and our stays, and the greater part of our standing and all our running rigging gone. Thus situated, it was some time before we could secure the masts and yards, so as to follow the French ship; however, in less than an hour we had another main topsail yard across, and the sails set, and by seven o’clock we were going nearly 7 knots, by the wind, in chase of our opponent, with the hope of forcing him to a renewal of the contest. He was then on our weather bow, distant from us about six

miles. We continued in pursuit until the 18th, at daylight, when it was with real sorrow I discovered that the enemy had eluded us during the night, and as we were near to Antibes, I concluded that she must have got into some port thereabouts. The wind being fresh from the wrong quarter, and not having any hope of again meeting the object of our pursuit, I most reluctantly steered to resume my station."

In the fight two seamen were killed, and fourteen officers and men wounded; the enemy's loss, as was ascertained afterwards, was twenty-two killed and seventy-nine wounded.

From the outbreak of war in 1803 till Waterloo we lost 83 frigates captured, and 7 destroyed, and no line of battle ships. Our enemies during that period were the French, Spanish, Dutch, Danes, Russians, Turks, and Americans, and their united losses amounted to 173 ships of the line and frigates captured or destroyed, of which 101 were added to the English navy.

With Waterloo ended that state of war which has been aptly termed "eighteen hundred and war time." It is impossible to conceive such conditions now. After the twenties a boat action with pirates or with slavers was something to talk over in the village ale-houses, but before then these small affairs were of such common occurrence that the prints of the time scarce gave them a half-dozen lines of space. Turn up at random the Portsmouth and Plymouth reports or the *Gazette* letters anywhere between 1803 and 1816 and fights are reported as frequently, and in as matter of course a fashion, as are cricket and football matches now in a sporting newspaper. And it must be remembered that

no sailor could dodge fighting, even though he might escape the press and ship on board a merchantman. The merchant skippers generally showed a good stomach for an encounter with any enemy who was in the least degree near them in weight of metal. Even the very passengers showed a readiness to take a hand that must have put heart into the least warlike of merchant seamen. Here, for example, are one or two incidents taken at random from contemporary prints:—

The ship *Planter* of Liverpool, bound from Hampton Roads to London, was in 1799 nearing the mouth of the channel, when she was chased and overtaken by a French privateer. Finding that he could not escape, the skipper of the *Planter* backed his main topsail, ran up the British ensign, cleared for action, and called upon the crew to give three cheers. The *Planter's* armament was 12 nine-pounders and 6 six-pounders, her crew forty-three men. The privateer had 22 guns, twelves, nines, and sixes, with small arms in the tops, and her decks were crowded with men. When she saw the little merchantman heave to, and heard the cheer, the cool impudence of the Englishman so astonished the other that he just popped one of his twelve-pound shots across the bows of the merchantman, expecting an instant surrender in the face of such an imperative warning. But the privateer was soon undeceived. According to the skipper of the *Planter*:—"We immediately rounded to and gave her a broadside, which commenced the action on both sides. The first broadside we received cut away all our halliards, topsail sheets, and braces, and killed three men on the quarter-deck. We kept up a constant fire for two glasses and a half, when she sheered off to repair damages, and in

about one glass returned to board us. We were all in readiness to receive him, got our broadsides to bear upon him, and poured in our language and grape shot with great success. A heavy fire kept up on both sides for three glasses this second time; in all, the engagement continued for five glasses. At last he found we would not give out, and night coming on, sheered off and stood away. His loss, no doubt, was considerable, as for the last two glasses we were so nigh each other that our fire must have done great execution. When he sheered off we saw him heaving dead bodies overboard in abundance. Our ship is damaged in the hull; one twelve-pound shot under the starboard cat-head splintered the sides much; one double-headed shot through the long boat; sails, rigging, spars, prodigiously injured. We had four killed, and eight wounded. My ship's company acted with a degree of courage which does credit to the flag. I cannot help mentioning the good conduct of my passengers during the action. Mr M'Kennon and Mr Hodgson, with small arms, stood to their quarters with a degree of noble spirit; my two lady passengers, Mrs M'Dowell and Miss Mary Harley, kept conveying the cartridges from the magazine to the deck, and were very attentive to the wounded, both during and after the action, in dressing their wounds and administering every comfort the ship could afford."

When the *Planter* got into port, the merchants of Liverpool subscribed a sum of money for the two ladies who had behaved with such courage, and a local print reports that they also set on foot inquiry for the parents of one "William Aickin, a native of that town, who was killed in the action, after signalising himself in the most exemplary manner. Early in the conflict he re-

ceived two wounds, one of which almost separated his hand from the arm, notwithstanding which, without any other assistance than the application of some styptic and a bandage by Mrs M'Dowell and her companion, he returned to his station and continued his exertion in defence of the ship till he fell in a manner covered with wounds from a broadside too successfully directed by the adversary. He was then carried below, where he expired, in a few minutes, after requesting Mrs M'Dowell to convey his duty to his parents, and to let them know that 'he died in a good cause.'

On the 4th July 1799 the *Townley* of Liverpool, a small merchantman, was captured by a French privateer of 14 guns. The privateer took out all the English seamen except the mate and one other, and put a prize crew of six men on board, with orders to take the prize into the nearest French port. As soon as the privateer was out of sight, the two Englishmen seized an opportunity to make prisoners of three Frenchmen who were below, then rushed on deck and secured the other three, headed the ship for an English port, and brought her in in safety.

In the same year a West Indiaman, the *Benson*, beat off a French corvette that had attempted her capture; while the *Earl St Vincent*, a Falmouth schooner, engaged two French privateers and four Spanish gunboats off Cape Spartel. The Frenchmen were vessels mounting from 8 to 12 guns, and having from sixty to eighty men each. The English schooner was fitted for privateering, having 18 guns, though they were only four- and six-pounders, and her crew numbered only 40 men. Surrounded by six vessels, the Englishman was getting the worst

of it, and the report states: "Finding it useless to contend with such superior forces, he ordered his stern and quarters to be cut, and made a battery of his stern chace, from which he kept up a constant fire on the enemy, making at the same time all the sail he could to reach Tangier Bay, which he did after an action, in the whole, of five hours and a quarter."

Even so far away as in the South Seas, our merchant seamen were carrying on the war. The South Sea whalers were nearly all provided with letters of marque, and before the port of Sydney was twenty years old a prize court was sitting in it to dispose of prizes captured by whalers from the Spaniards and the Dutch.

For example, in 1799, the whalers made prizes of a couple of Spaniards, and Captain Hunter, then Governor of New South Wales, wrote to England explaining certain precautions he had taken in mounting guns on Sydney Heads, when, as he expected, the enemy would make reprisals. The Spaniards were duly condemned and sold in the prize court, and no more was heard of the matter, although one of them, the *Infanta Amelia*, was a fine new vessel not long launched from the Spanish dockyard at Bilbao.

Another interesting privateering affair in Australian waters was the capture by the *Policy* of the Dutch privateer *Swift*. The *Swift* was originally *La Minerve*, a French privateer which by her captures of English merchantmen in the English Channel had become quite famous. Then she was sold to the Dutch, and in 1804 was owned by a Batavian firm.

She fell in with the *Policy*, a South Sea whaler, in September 1804, off Timor, and being well armed, imagined it would be easy to take the Englishman. Captain Forster of the *Policy*, thinking the Dutchman was too big for him, tried to run away, but the *Swift* overhauled the *Policy*, so the Englishman turned about, and in the course of an hour's fighting thrashed the Dutchman, and a few days later brought her to an anchor as his prize in Sydney Harbour.

When the *Policy* was on her way to Sydney, she fell in with the *Iris*, another South Sea whaler, and cautioned her to be on the look out for Dutch privateers, as the Batavian merchants had fitted out several vessels with the express intention of driving the Englishmen out of the Dutch Archipelago. "Very well," said Captain Clark of the *Iris*, "I will be on the look out for them, and if I fall in with any Dutchmen, I know who'll have to go." A day or two later, when off the Island of Omba, sure enough, the *Iris* sighted a privateer nearly twice her size and complement of crew and guns. Then Clark called upon his men to support him, and stood right down to the Dutchmen. The rest of the story I will quote from a contemporary report in the *Sydney Gazette* of 1804. "Captain Clark gave chase, and in a few hours coming up, commenced engaging. Impatient to decide a contest in which her weight of metal was overmatched, the *Iris* ran aboard of her antagonist, and must have carried her had not her complement of men been also most unequal. An incessant fire of musketry from the Batavian, which the *Iris* was not sufficiently manned to answer, forced the people to

shelter beneath her bulwarks, but her brave commander maintained his post and, deaf to the entreaties of his people, gloriously fell, covered with wounds and bathed in his blood. Then the chief officer took charge of the *Iris*, and, seeing that it was futile to continue the contest, made sail from the enemy and succeeded in escaping."

The bombardment of Algiers in 1816 gave the old sailors of the French war a last chance to smell powder burnt in earnest. The expedition was under the command of Lord Exmouth who, as Sir Edward Pellew, had in the previous wars become famous as a fighting man. Five sail of the line, five frigates and twelve bomb vessels and brigs of war were put under his command, and the Dutch, wishing to take part in destroying the Barbary pirates, who for generations had been a danger to merchants of all nations, joined the expedition with a fleet of four frigates and two sloops of war.

Although this expedition was against an uncivilised power, it was one of the hardest fought naval battles of the century, leaving out, of course, the great actions of the French war. The bombardment opened at half-past two in the afternoon and lasted nearly twelve hours. The total British loss was 128 killed and 690 wounded, and the Dutch had 32 killed and 50 wounded.

The reduction of Algiers released many unfortunate Christians, whose stories of their slavery would, if such were needed, be an ample justification of this "little war." A youth, named Dupont, at the age of 15, was a groom in the service of the Count d'Artois, and followed that nobleman to the siege of Gibraltar.

Having joined a vessel conveying orders to Count d'Estaing, he was wrecked on the coast of Africa and carried prisoner to the Algerians, where he was kept a slave thirty-four years, working during that time yoked to a plough. When the English bombarded the city, he was among the released prisoners, and was sent home to his own country. At the same time, an Englishman, belonging to Brighton, who had been twenty-six years a prisoner, was restored to his home. During his absence, three fields of which he was the owner had been sold, and part of the Pavilion and some other buildings erected upon them.

In 1827 the combined English, French, and Russian squadron destroyed the Turkish fleet at Navarino with a loss to the allies of 177 killed and 480 wounded, of whom the British lost 75 killed and 197 wounded. In 1840 we bombarded Acre. Our squadron included the *Cyclops* and the *Gorgon* paddle steamers, and this is the first occasion in our war history on which steamers were engaged. There were about five-and-twenty ships employed, from the *Princess Charlotte* of 104 guns down to brigs of war, but only two steamers. Sir Robert Stopford, who was in command of the squadron, was ordered to support the Syrians in their endeavours to expel the troops of Mehemet Ali. This little war cost us 12 killed and 32 wounded.

In 1842, and again in 1856, we were at war with China, while the Indian Mutiny saw our fleet landing seamen and marines, and taking such active part in its suppression, that the Naval Brigade, under Peel, by 1858 had won for itself the right, which it has ever since kept, to a considerable space in our war story.

But there were to be no more big naval battles

during this century. The historians of the Crimea generously make the most of the services of the Naval Brigade, but, in spite of their endeavours, they cannot glorify the achievements of our fleets in the Baltic and the Black Sea. Six months before the war a review was held at Spithead, when the newspapers gave a full account of the tremendous might of England.

The fleet reviewed consisted of 7 screw line of battle ships, their speed varying from a fraction over 10 knots an hour to 7 knots; 3 sailing line of battle ships, 4 screw frigates, speed 10 knots to 7 knots; 4 screw sloops, 10 knots to 6 knots; and one paddle corvette of 9 knots. The tonnage of the *Duke of Wellington*, then the pride of the service, was 3771, and 980 was her horse power; she was armed with 131 guns. The rest of the vessels were from 3000 tons to 1000, and their horse power was from 600 down to 300, and that of the paddle corvette was only 60.

When the first division of the Baltic Fleet was on the eve of sailing from Portsmouth in March 1854, Sir Charles Napier, in the course of a reply to an address presented by the mayor of the town, said, "I warn you not to expect too much. The fleet is a new one, the system of warfare is new; great consideration is required to ascertain how it is best to manage a fleet urged by steam."

This fleet comprised 8 screw line of battle ships and 4 screw and 4 paddlewheel frigates and sloops, and included the earliest and latest specimens of ship-building. The *Duke of Wellington*, the flagship, was new, the *Royal George* was built in 1827, and the *Amphion* and *Arrogant* were two of the first ships to be converted into steamers, and were only eight years

old. The *Tribune*, a paddle steamer, was the newest vessel, having been launched at Sheerness only a few months before. The strength of the whole fleet represented 7570 horse power, and when the second division sailed later, the whole Baltic Fleet of 44 vessels represented only 16,000 horse power. In this fleet many of the crew had never been to sea before they were enlisted, the new system of continuous service had not been more than a couple of years in existence, and we had not trained enough men in the time to go round. But though it was expected that to carry on the war we should soon have the old bounty and impressment systems in full swing, sufficient volunteers came forward, and for the first time in our sea history our ships went into action manned without recourse to the old methods.

A year after the war broke out, sailing ships were replaced by steamers. Ten years later, iron-clad steamers were not novelties, so that the Crimean war, in the middle of the century, very clearly marks the boundary between the old and the new navy in the ships and the personnel of the service. The bombardment of Sebastopol demonstrated that wooden ships with the guns of the time—sixty-eight pounders at the heaviest—were worse than useless against the forts with their long range and heavy artillery.

The story of the American Civil War, and the doings of the *Merrimac* and *Monitor* has been told often enough; our first experience with the new class of ships and weapons was in 1877, in the affair between the *Shah* and *Amethyst* against the Peruvian rebel iron-clad turret ship, the *Huascar*. She carried 2 three-hundred pounders and 3 shell guns; the *Shah* was

an unarmoured vessel, but she was armed with 2 twelve-ton and 16 six-and-a-half ton guns, and after three hours blazing at one another at ranges from 400 to 3000 yards, no material damage was done to the hulls of either of the vessels, and the Peruvian got away under cover of the night.

In the suppression of the slave trade, our navy has been continually engaged all through the century, and many brilliant boat actions have been fought between bluejackets and slavers. Writing from Kingston, Jamaica, in 1857, on the capture of a slaver by the pinnace of H.M.S. *Arab*, a correspondent of an English newspaper said that on an average two vessels a week left Africa with slaves on board, varying in number from 500 to 700, and that owing to the smallness of the vessels—about 140-ton schooners—a couple of hundred of the poor wretches died on each voyage. In the 130-ton vessel captured by the *Arab*, there were 370 slaves, and 170 of them had died on the trip. In 1845, a Spanish slaver was captured off Lagos by the *Wasp*, and a prize crew was put on board. When the vessels parted company, the Spaniards suddenly rose on the Englishmen and murdered eleven of them including the young officer in charge. Soon afterwards another English cruiser fell in with the vessel and retook her, and brought the murderers to England, where they were tried, and seven of them hanged at Exeter.

The bombardment of Alexandria in July 1882 by eight of what were then modern battleships, and six smaller vessels, is the only modern experience of war our navy has had, and so rapid have the changes been, that most of the eight ships that took part in that invasion are now ranked as non-effective. Yet so great

was the change in the armament in the less than thirty years that elapsed between Sebastopol and Alexandria, that our ships stood off at long ranges, and with their 81-ton, 25-ton, and 18-ton guns, destroyed the forts, with the trifling loss to us of six killed and about five-and-twenty wounded.

During the action, the men of the navy made the most of their small opportunities, and gave a comforting assurance that under new conditions of service the old spirit existed. Lord Charles Beresford ran his little gunboat, the *Condor*, close up to one of the forts, and by good shooting silenced two very annoying ten-inch guns; and Mr Harding, the gunner of the *Alexandra*, hearing that a live shell had fallen on the deck of his ship, ran up from below, extinguished the fuse, and threw the shell into a tub of water, for which gallant deed he was given the Victoria Cross.

In our little wars the Naval Brigade has been continually employed of late years, and the service of the marines unexcelled *per mare per terram*. In the attempt to relieve Gordon in 1885, the Naval Brigade particularly distinguished itself, and there is one incident in that campaign, that for its gallantry will long be remembered to the honour of the new service. Lord Charles Beresford, in the Nile steamer *Sofia*, on his way to the relief of Sir Charles Wilson and party, who had been wrecked, and were encamped on an island up the river, encountered a very severe fire from the banks, and one of the shots at last went through the boiler. For many hours the steamer remained under fire, gallantly defended by the bluejackets, the marines, and a party of mounted infantry, who had been specially chosen by Beresford to accompany him. Then, when

the boiler cooled, Mr Benbow, the chief engineer, set to repair it. What this work meant can be judged by the fact that it took ten hours to accomplish, and Mr Benbow had to shape the plate, bore the holes in plate and boiler, and fit the screws and nuts, almost entirely with his own hands, as every one of his assistants had been severely scalded by the explosion. Lord Charles Beresford accomplished his object successfully, owing to his own splendid energy and resourcefulness, and to the courage, coolness, and skill of those under him. This incident—not by any means the only noteworthy one that has occurred in modern times—has a cheering significance to us. Sometimes, perhaps, we do in our heart of hearts have slight misgivings as to whether steam and steel is not a dangerous leveller. We won battles once, we think, because our men were handy in getting aloft, and our sail trimmers could box the yards about in such smart fashion as is only possible to a Sea Race. How, now that the days of oak and hemp have gone, will fare the Sea Race? Mr Benbow—significant name for such a man to bear—shaping boiler plates and fitting screws and nuts on board the crippled *Sofia*, did in manner very satisfying, go a long way towards answering this question.

While this book is going through the press, the newspapers of the world are recording how much the intelligence, skill, and common-sense of naval officers, and the energy and good training of their men, have done in South Africa towards mitigating the scandalous administrative blunders that have so hampered the sister service.

CHAPTER VI

THE GROWTH OF OUR SEA CARRYING

Whalers—"Geordie" Colliers and American Packet Ships—The Old-Fashioned Trader and the New—Emigrant Ships and Ocean Liners—Tea and Wool Clippers and Modern Cargo Steamers.

EARLY in the century our ocean traders assembled in fleets, and East Indiamen or West Indiamen by hundreds lay in the Downs or at Spithead, sometimes for weeks together, waiting for convoy or for fair wind. With the peace, of course, the need of convoy no longer hampered the movements of ships, but it was late in the fifties before colonial developments, steam, and the abolition of monopolies, together combined to lay the foundation of present conditions. For more than fifty years of the century the East India Company monopolised the trade of the East, for more than fifty years the Hudson's Bay Company controlled the trade of the British possessions in North America. Rival companies were formed to compete with the India Company, but it reformed itself so as to swallow them; and the Hudson's Bay Company by the end of the thirties, so far from being injured by rivalry, extended its agencies across the Continent from Labrador to British Columbia.

The coal trade and the fisheries were, as has been often said, the nurseries of our seamen, and more sailors were trained in "Geordie" colliers than in all other branches of the sea-carrying trade together. The colliers, though lacking in beauty, and justifying the American description of them: "Stem and stern sawed off square like a sugar-box," were faithfully built—there are vessels afloat to-day that were launched when the century was in its teens. Not only in the coal trade, but in the Baltic and the Mediterranean, such vessels did the bulk of our carrying, and it is only during the last decade that steam has so gained the ascendancy as to bring the last day of the last sailing-ship within measurable distance.

One important branch of the sea trade was whaling—steadily declining now, and destined, probably before many years have elapsed, to die. The price of whale oil has so fallen, owing to the use of other illuminants, that it scarcely pays to obtain it; and though whalebone has risen in price from £25 per ton early in the century to £2500 a ton at the close, the scarcity of the right whale has had the result of leaving the trade none the better off, for the average price of oil is not a fourth of what it was in the heyday of the industry.

From Hull, in 1814, no fewer than 58 whalers sailed for the Greenland and Davis Straits Fisheries; and from Dundee, Peterhead, and Aberdeen the whaling fleets in the four years 1814-18 made 192 voyages, catching 1682 whales. By the time that steam-whaling began in 1858, the right whales of the north and the sperm whales of the southern fisheries were growing scarce, and now statistics show that

it is not unusual for a whole fleet to make a loss on the season's whaling. What a pride they used to take in the old whale-ships, and what rivalry there was between Aberdeen, and Peterhead, and Dundee. The Editor of the *Dundee Advertiser* of forty years ago wrote in his paper: "Ours is a small but very efficient fleet; five of the craft cost on an average £15,000 each, and the total value of the 8 ships is about equal to that of the 28 owned by our friends of Peterhead."

The Dundee whaling fleet in 1861 consisted of 6 steam-vessels and 2 sailing-ships, varying from 660 tons to 325 tons. In the sailing days the ships were painted in gay colours, and flew red and green and blue ribbons from their mast-heads, some whalers taking special pride in green and black hulls, or painted ports with imitation guns sticking through them. But steam altered all this, and black paint everywhere to hide the dirt of coal smoke took the place of former brightness.

What catches they made, and what disappointments they met with! In 1855 the gross produce of 27 Peterhead whalers exceeded in value £125,000, and for three years following averaged more than £70,000 a year; while in the same year the Dundee ships only averaged £600 each, and were so discouraged that in the following season they only sent out 3 ships, and when these three came home, each brought cargo worth more than £10,000. In the decade 1850 to 1860, the whalers earned for the Scotch ports to which they belonged upwards of a million sterling. The Hull Greenlanders and whalers from other ports in the North of England were as good men, and sailed

in as good ships as ever left the Scotch ports. Those famous whalers and Arctic explorers, the Scoresbys, father and son, in the ten years they sailed the *Resolution*, from Whitby, between 1803-13, earned for the owners £70,077, which made a clear profit for the proprietor, on an original advance of £8000, of £20,718. But it is probable the Americans were more skilful than the British North Sea whalers, and it is certain that they were, and are, far cleverer than our South Seamen, while the South Sea Islanders, who were largely employed in the boats, after a short training were infinitely better than any Europeans.

Portuguese were the best harpooners afloat, though they were little good in any other work except steering. I saw an instance of the truth of this in a sailing-ship in the Indian Ocean some time in the seventies. A school of fish played round the bows as the vessel lay almost becalmed; they were bonito or albacore, or some deep-water fish of the kind, and the whole ship's company spent hours trying to catch them with hooks and lines, but in vain. Thereupon some one suggested an attempt with the *grains*, a trident with barbed points, but when the sailors one after another had tried their hands at this without spearing a single fish, "Portugee Joe" was relieved from the wheel where he nearly always was, for steering was the sum of his knowledge of seamanship. He went forward and watched the fishing, then said: "Give me zee grains, I will catch zee feesh for you." Taking the weapon, he arranged for himself a comfortable position in the bowsprit rigging, and in a couple of hours had landed on the deck nearly a hundred fish. He never missed a fish and there

were so many that all hands for a week afterwards were suffering from some mild form of fish poisoning—over-eating themselves, probably—though the moon rays falling on the fish, as the catch was slung in rows along the deck, was said by the old salts to be the cause of the trouble.

Sperm whaling in the South Seas is now practically dead, although it was at one time the principal sea trade of Sydney, for the export of oil was a greater source of prosperity than that of wool. Enderby, a well-known London shipowner, leased from the Imperial Government, in the forties, the Auckland Islands, using them as a station for the whale and seal fisheries, and Enderby's vessels were in the South Seas twenty years before the century opened. The Americans were there as soon, or before, and American whale ships are now doing what little whaling there is. Herman Melville has well described the life, and Mr Bullen has recently written an entertaining book on the subject. The cruising grounds extended north and west to the Sandwich Islands and the coast of Japan, and south to New Zealand.

Convict transports on their way to Australia carried whaling gear in their holds, and when the ships had discharged their freights of misery, "departed for the fisheries." Some sporadic and desultory experiments conducted by one or two vessels before the century opened, developed, twenty years later, to such an extent that Enderby found himself contending with any number of rivals, and by 1852 American and Australian owned whale-ships, drove him out of the trade, and the Auckland Islands were abandoned. Hobart, Tasmania, or Hobart-Town,

as it was then called, was up to the sixties a head centre of the trade, and the long-shore men on the banks of the Derwent talked oil and blubber just as a New South Welshman talked wool and sheep. A year or two ago in Hobart I was shown in a ship-chandler's shop the present state of the fisheries. "Much whaling nowadays, eh?" said the proprietor of the store. "Come with me, I'll show you." He led me to a room at the back of the premises where lay dozens of coils of silky manila line, heaps of harpoons, bombguns, lances, and all the other gear familiar to readers of whaling yarns. "There," said he, "there's £600 or £700 worth of gear; if you could find a purchaser for it at the price of old iron, I'd be satisfied." Whaling, as I have said, is a branch of the sea trade that is disappearing altogether, but it is, I think, the only one; in all others the whole system of carrying is changed, but the carrying goes on multiplied by many hundreds.

The China tea trade is an example: the China tea clipper has disappeared, and the wool clipper will soon be as much a thing of the past as the old-fashioned Atlantic packet ship; in place of the tea and wool clippers we have fine fast steamers, and every one now speaks and thinks of the Atlantic steamer service as a huge ferry. The packet ships went first, driven out in our fathers' time, but quite young men can remember the last of the China tea clippers. The ocean race home with the first of the season's teas, between the fifties and the seventies, was talked of and written about, as much as, and was more interesting to read of than, Atlantic greyhound records. The Americans cut in at it, and there was great rivalry between the

builders of both countries, thousands of pounds in bets and offers of prizes sometimes depending on the result of a race between American and English ships—the honours, on the whole, being pretty equally divided.

The race of 1868—an ocean race of 13,000 miles between 40 of the finest clippers of the world—was an event to be remembered. The ships all sailed from Foo-Choo-Foo or neighbouring ports within a space of twenty-five days, their cargoes averaging from a million to a million and a half pounds of tea, and the ships, famous in previous and later voyages, all got into port within a few hours of each other, allowing for the difference in their time of sailing. The *Spindrift* made the quickest passage—ninety-four days; the *Ariel*, the *Taeping*, the *Sir Lancelot*, the *Serica*, and the *Fiery Cross*, all famous ships, were not far behind. This was the first year in which there was no money prize to be gained by winning the race, as had been the custom in former times, but the skippers were influenced by no sordid motives, and they drove their ships for all they were worth. My friend John Arthur Barry, who was on board of one of these clippers in this very race, has thus pictured a scene off the Cape of Good Hope:—

“To windward a limitless expanse of greenish-grey, mingled here and there with tufts and curls of white, seethes, rolls, and dashes itself in thunderous billows against the good ship, then in foiled fury crawls snarling away to leeward in broken masses of white foam. Aloft, three swelling patches of dirty white appear to hang against the lowering sky in the dim light of that Southern evening; these are the three reefed

topsails of the *Yang-Tze*; listen to the shrill voice of the blast as it howls in and around their bosoms, stretched like iron from the sharply braced-up yards, or whistles and hums through the running gear as if it were playing on some immense Æolian harp.

"Swish-swosh, with a loud roar at intervals, comes a green sea over the bows, falling in a glittering cascade across the break of the forecastle, then rushing irresistibly away aft. The tall masts creak and groan and sway and bend, as the vessel now throws her bows high in the air, now brings them down with a sounding thump; one moment riding on the summit of an abyss deep and narrow, in another with a long, swift, sickening slide, plunged to its very bottom enclosed by the threatening and lofty walls of foam-flecked water.

"Run your eye now along the weather bulwarks, and you will see, through the gloom, two or three black knots, looking for all the world like some ocean fungi that have attached themselves to the ship's rail, so motionless and without sign of life are they, except that every now and again from the midst of one of the black knots flies a red spark away down to foaming, hissing leeward. These are groups of the watch on deck; the largest one seems to be opposite to where a bright gleam from a crack in the closed door of the galley throws a flickering pencil of light athwart the wet deck, and is feebly reflected from shining oilskins and dripping sou'-westers. Four men are holding on by some of the running gear. Two of them are smoking, and now and again their weather-beaten, salt-encrusted faces are lit up under their sou'-westers by the red spark of light from the mouths of their short pipes. They seem absorbed in silent contemplation, their gaze only

turning from the sea out to leeward to the topsails overhead."*

Presently the captain comes leisurely on deck and takes a look aloft and then to windward. The officer of the watch is making his first voyage in a tea clipper, and now he thinks at last will come the order to call all hands to shorten sail. But the captain turns quietly towards him and says: "Shake out the reefs in the topsails, Mr Blank, and set the main-topgallant-sail!"

The opening of the Suez Canal and the progress of steam, from the seventies, drove many of these clippers into the Australian wool trade, and steamers took up the running. But even they continued to race, and in a more expensive fashion, for a steamer, after making two or three voyages, was often eclipsed by a rival, and had to be taken off the trade, and a new and faster vessel put in her place. This kind of racing drove at least one firm of shipowners into private life. The tea race still goes on, some of the finest steamers afloat being in this service, but there is less excitement about it now, owing to the common-sense, modern view, of looking at a high average of results rather than one remarkably smart passage.

The wool clippers were no less famous than the tea clippers. They sailed from London, usually with a valuable general cargo, and the name and performances of every ship were known then to most Australians; for these were the vessels that brought from home many of the best and most useful class of colonists. And many a "leading citizen," or proprietor of thousands of acres of sheep-lands, with a family of young colonials now writing regularly to English cousins they have never seen,

* *In the Great Deep*, J. A. Barry (Methuen, London, 1896).

came out "first cabin" in one or other of these ships. These old colonists look down the shipping news in the papers to-day, and catching sight of a familiar name—now, alas ! sailing under the Norwegian or German flag—remember that time, thirty or more years ago, when they first saw Sydney Heads from the deck of the *Salamis*, the *Windsor Castle*, or the *Ocean Queen*.

The ships raced out around the Cape of Good Hope, and often did the passage as quickly as the earlier steamers ; then loading wool, screwed into their holds so that a cockroach could scarcely find a space between the bales or the deck beams, raced round Cape Horn back to London again to catch the sales. Well manned and well found in every respect were these ships, and their skippers carried on sail till the canvas blew from the bolt ropes, or the good spars bending almost double could no longer stand the strain, and, snapping, left a tangle of wreckage to clear away, giving the youngsters lessons in the mysteries of rigging, now not obtainable.

But to the shipmasters and strong-handed ships of those days, a few sails or spars more or less meant nothing. Freights were high, and owners liberal with respect to stores ; also they encouraged their captains to make fast passages by the offer of handsome premiums. The vessels, too, were, in many cases, elaborately fitted up to carry passengers in two or even three classes ; and when steamers often took fifty days to come out, and a clipper rattled along at her heels in seventy-three, the advertisement covered the cost of a lot of gear.

A pleasant sight it was to see the spacious saloon of an A I clipper, in fine weather, with its soft carpet and easy chairs and lounges, ferns and flowers, pictures and

piano; and at meal times the well-appointed table, with the old skipper at its head, stout and bluff and weather-beaten, doing the honours of the ship generally, with one of the handsomest lady passengers at each side of him. Then, when the soft warm trades blew the huge pyramid of shining canvas along with everything set from her skysails down, "bonnets" on her top sails, "save-alls," "watersails," and other contrivances for holding wind, whose very names are now almost forgotten, swelling out here and there about her, it was almost like yacht sailing.

Not so pleasant, perhaps, when the "Old Man" was "sending her" close hauled into a head sea; fiddles on the table, wash-boards at the saloon doors, the carpets rolled up, stewards falling in heaps to the sound of broken crockery; boys baling out boats, and green combers popping their crests over the fo'c'sle head, and roaring away right aft to the break of the poop. Not over and above pleasant, of course, but even then better than any floating steam coffee palace that was ever built! And now there are no ships like unto them, nor ever will be any more. The cargo carrier of to-day is simply a huge iron or steel box, with three or four iron or steel sticks stuck into her, and an iron or steel spike protruding from her nondescript bows in place of the stout bowsprit and long, lancing, graceful jib-boom of the old clipper. Her stowage capacity must be enormous to counteract the low freight; and the last idea in her skipper's mind is that he should attempt to make a record passage. In fact, he couldn't do so if he wished, in the majority of cases, because the ponderous and heavily-weighted fabric he commands takes little heed of her acres of canvas unless in a heavy gale; she

will do ten or eleven knots till the poor canvas blows away. Then she stops, while the "crowd" of fourteen ordinary seamen gather the remnants together. This, remember, is the cargo sailer pure and simple—the tramp that takes anything that offers, from guano to coal, railway iron to lumber, at rates that about pay wear and tear and the crew's wages. There are, however, a few *bona-fide* wool clippers yet left unsold to Scandinavian or Italian buyers, and running home with passengers and cargo from both Sydney and Melbourne.

What becomes of these fine ships as they drop out of the running? Twenty years seems to be about the extreme life of an English clipper, as an English clipper; then she is sold to foreign owners, or is discovered unexpectedly a hulk in some foreign or colonial port.

I remember seeing in Liverpool in 1876 the *Khersonese*, then a full-rigged sailing ship. She was launched in 1855 from Robert Hickson & Co.'s yard at Belfast as an auxiliary screw steamer, and was 222 ft. long, and of about 1700 tons register, and at the time of her launch was reported to be the largest and finest vessel built in Ireland up to that date. Even in 1876 she was looked upon as a very fine ship, and people were saying what a pity she could get no better freight than coal to the East Indies. An old sailor looking at her told his mate that she was the finest vessel afloat when she was launched. "Pooh," answered the other, who belonged to a younger generation, "that old collier! she was never considered a fine ship, that's only your imagination."

More than one of these fine vessels that twenty years ago used to be given the pride of place in the

berthing at Circular Quay, Sydney, can still often be seen in its vicinity, but under what changed conditions. To-day some gigantic 10,000-ton ocean liner lies alongside the quay, arrogantly taking up more space than two of the old clippers, now become coal hulks; creaking derricks and iron gins in place of their tapering spars and graceful rigging. Thus they lie along the outer side of the mail steamer, discharging coal for her bunkers, and so blotted out from the quay by her towering bulwarks as to be shut out of even a sight of it.

The Western Islands fruiterers were another class of beautiful little vessels soon to be forgotten. From May to November every year, from the Azores, Italy, Malta, and other orange-growing countries, they carried fruit to the London markets, and in the fifties nearly three hundred of these vessels were engaged in the trade, most of them schooners, and several of them three-masted. They lasted till the eighties—a few of them are still left—but steam has driven the bulk of them out, and they are now foreign coasters, and more than one famous Western Island schooner is carrying coal on the Australian coast. Southern-going sailors, looking forward, after a long voyage to Australia or the East, to paying-off day, knew they were nearly home after passing the Azores, when with the strong westerly behind, and the Gulf Stream weed drifting past on the current, the fruit schooners began to show up on the horizon.

In the forties, emigration to America in fine-looking frigate-built clippers, carrying three skysails and a moonraker, with all kinds of fancy kites in studding-sails and save-alls, and sometimes flying the American

"gridiron" or the red ensign, looked very pretty when this aspect of it was shown by pencil of artist or by pen of song writer. But there was need to sing "Cheer, Boys, Cheer," when the interior of the ship was looked at. Emigration came under Government supervision only by slow degrees, as the gross abuses that were prevalent made noise enough to wake very sleepy Honourable Members. One feature of the business was for a number of rascals to band themselves together, calling themselves emigration agents, who regularly touted for passengers, taking them for what they could get.

From 60,000 in the year 1837, in 1847 the number of emigrants from England to America, Canada, and Australia had increased to 121,000; then came the gold rush, and in 1852 the number reached within a few of 88,000 persons to Australia alone, and still more than 100,000 every year went to America. Most of these people were quartered in the hold of the ship—that is to say, on the 'tween decks—the lower hold being filled with cargo. The so-called accommodation consisted of as many bunks of unplanned deal boards as could be crowded together by every device an ingenious carpenter could think of, the bunks often three tiers high, and so thickly packed that the people had to crawl over each other to get into the inner ones. Married and single, families from grandparents to infants in arms, were indiscriminately put into one compartment of the hold with nothing but curtains to divide them, and in many cases on the Atlantic voyage a few biscuits and a bag or two of oatmeal was all the food provided. The ship supplied three quarts of water to each adult, but beyond this the

emigrants found themselves in absolutely everything, bedding, food, attendance, and all else. Many of them came from the heart of Ireland, and had never seen a ship before they embarked, and the scene below in rough weather, when a couple of hundred of people of all ages and both sexes were battened down and left to their own devices, can be imagined. As a matter of fact, with all the regulations that, as time went on, were devised for the better carrying of these people, the condition of the steerage passenger remained almost as bad, and even now it is occasionally disgraceful.

In the seventies I have personal knowledge of a ship that took about fifty or sixty steerage passengers to Australia—too small a number to bring her within the regular category of an emigrant ship. She was four months on the voyage out, and was overrun with vermin, contracted by the filthy condition of the 'tween decks, where the passengers were stowed, according to Act of Parliament, in bunks of only two tiers, with so many cubic feet of space, and all the rest of it, but of plain unpainted deal. A careless shipmaster, indifferent to the cleansing or regulation of this place, left these people to their own devices, and the only cleansing it got on the long voyage was an occasional careless sweep when one or other of the emigrants became desperately hard up for amusement.

On this ship, in accordance with the advertisement, "a duly qualified medical man" was carried. As soon as the ship got into fine weather, this gentleman, every morning, in company with a kindred spirit, ascended to the main-top, and sitting there, played euchre most of the day, he and his partner refreshing themselves from

time to time from the bottle of brandy they had taken aloft with them. The doctor was a "shilling-a-month man," that is a person who, for that nominal wage and his services, worked his passage. If any emigrant wanted his advice, the patient had to hail the maintop, and relate his symptoms in a voice loud enough to be heard a hundred feet from the deck, and, as the doctor remarked, this kept people from bothering him about trifles, and ship passengers, as a rule, *do* revel in free advice and medicine.

On the same ship was an old woman apparently nearly eighty. She had managed, no one knew how, to make her way from the interior of Ireland to the ship at Liverpool, embarking a few hours before the vessel left the wharf, and seating herself quietly on the after-hatch, a bundle, apparently all her belongings, beside her. The voyage lasted four months, and no one during the whole of it could remember seeing the after-hatch without the old woman sitting upon it; when the pitch was boiling out of the deck seams in the intervals of tropic rains, as the ship lay becalmed on the equator, when the vessel rolled green seas on board as she drove before the cold gales of the roaring forties, that old woman seemed always in the same place nervously fingering her rosary, and waiting, waiting wearily for the end of the voyage and the sight of her son. For we found, in time, that she was going to Victoria to end her days with her son, who had emigrated thirty years before, and who was to meet her at Melbourne. When the ship arrived he was not on the wharf, and for two days longer she remained on board, not knowing where else to go. Then, through the ship's agents, the

news came that the son was dead. The old woman was absolutely without a friend in the world, and she was taken away to some benevolent asylum, where she died before the ship sailed on the return voyage.

Emigrants, when the gold fever was at its height, sailed from nearly every port in the kingdom. In 1852 ships were built and fitted out at Sunderland, Barnstaple, Southampton, and a dozen other places, of tons register often not exceeding 500, and were frequently only small brigs. A ship of 800 tons burden, with 250 emigrants on board, was considered luxurious. When the *Great Britain* sailed for Australia in 1852 with 630 passengers she was spoken of as a floating hotel. Yet Australian waters were then considered dangerous enough to justify her in carrying 6 heavy deck guns and small arms for 100 men, "in case of attack by savages in these distant seas." She was so long on the trip, eighty odd days, that sailing ships beat her.

Charles Dickens in *American Notes* describes another famous passenger steamer, the *Britannia*, in which he went to America in 1842. He was eighteen days in making the passage to Boston, and he regarded his stateroom, the saloon, and the whole passenger accommodation, and the hardships of the voyage, as of a character, judging from his description of it, that would have shaken even Mark Tapley's philosophy. But the accommodation in the first class of the *Britannia*—no better than in the best of modern third class—was Buckingham Palace to Pentonville Prison compared with the average emigrant quarters.

The packet ships treated their passengers well, judged, of course, by the standard of the time. The famous Black Ball and similar lines of ships must not be confused with the cargo tramps hired by emigration agent swindlers. The Black Ball liner, *James Baines*, before leaving Portsmouth with troops for India, for which service she had been chartered by the Government, was visited by Queen Victoria, who is said to have declared that she had no idea such a splendid merchant ship was owned in her dominions. The *James Baines* was 243 feet long and of 2093 tons register; her owners, Messrs Baines of Liverpool, also owned many other vessels famous in the annals of the sea. Two of these, the *Lightning* and the *Champion of the Seas*, were among the smartest clippers ever built. When the *James Baines* had all her sails set, the whole numbered thirty-six, and she carried three skysails and a moonscraper; the last tiny kite has long become only a tradition in ships. This was the kind of vessel that only forty years ago occupied the pride of place in our merchant service, now filled by the Cunarder or White Star steamer of 12,000 tons and twenty-knot speed. Many of the famous Black Ballers remained afloat until quite recently, ending their days under a foreign flag or as colliers, but the *James Baines* was spared this ignoble ending—she was burned while in dock at Liverpool in 1858. The traditions of the line have been perpetuated in sea song and story, and even now occasionally can be heard a capstan shanty singer rolling out as the anchor is being weighed:—

“In the Black Ball Line I served my time,
Oh rise and shine in the Black Ball Line.”

When Washington Irving crossed the Atlantic in 1833 in a crack American packet ship, he was sixteen days to the Channel, and five more days before he landed at Portsmouth. Then the ship stayed a day or two, landed mails which were sent on by coach, and the voyage was resumed to London, the ship arriving at the docks in just about the same length of time as is now occupied in the steamer passage home from Australia. Irving incidentally mentions that the packet preceding his had run down an English brig in the night and drowned her captain, and he writes: "These encounters are necessarily very common in so frequented a sea where the weather is so often thick. Our packets, which run in all weathers and never heave to, are especially liable to accidents of this nature, and it is a curious commentary upon the received opinions in England, by which the people seek to console themselves for that superiority in model, equipment and speed, which is not easy to deny to us, in insisting that if our ships are handsomer, theirs are strongest; that in all these encounters Brother Jonathan passes on as if nothing had happened to him, and John Bull goes uniformly to the bottom."

A chapter in the history of the famous White Star Line illustrates the passenger carrying trade during the last half century in a very remarkable manner. More than fifty years ago the White Star Line ran a regular fleet of clippers from Liverpool to the Australian Colonies—fine wooden vessels, among the fastest afloat, the *Red Jacket*, a record breaker, is remembered to-day. In 1868, when iron was the fashion, this company built a new fleet, beginning

with the *Explorer*, "a fast iron clipper of 750 tons;" then competition and the rush of emigration induced the company to plunge into larger vessels, and in a couple of years ships of more than a thousand or fifteen hundred tons were laid on. In the seventies, the White Star Line having established itself as an Atlantic ferry, sold the last of its sailing vessels, the four-masted clipper *California*, the last sailing ship built by Harland & Wolff, and abandoned the Australian trade. But in the year 1899 the flag was once more seen in Australian waters flying from the *Medic*, a 12,000-ton steamer, the first of a fleet of nine great steamships intended to carry third-class passengers to and from Australia in a fashion hitherto unknown, providing them with accommodation considerably more luxurious than anything ever conceived for the saloon passengers of the *Red Jacket* days. Incidentally, it may be mentioned, though the White Star people do not hint at it anywhere, these big steamers will, without doubt, put the final extinguisher on the wool clipper, and therein will the enterprise of the great company find perhaps a greater reward than in the passenger carrying. With the last of the wool clippers is the end of the clipper ship, and thenceforward the word clipper will be but a tradition of the past.

A branch of the "passenger" carrying trade now extinct is the old convict transport service. The thousands of prisoners carried to Australia in the first fifty years of the century made of this no unimportant industry, for the ships that took prisoners out had to take cargoes home to make the voyage profitable, and this developed our trade in remote

places that would otherwise have remained for another generation or two unheard of. The convict transport has often been described. The prisoners were confined between decks, the prison being barricaded off from the quarters of the crew by strong wooden partitions, and the hatches guarded in similar fashion. Mutinies were frequent on board these ships. Here is a report selected from any number which I could quote:—"Captain Wilson in command of the guard, my first officer, surgeon, and purser, with two ladies, were at dinner, when suddenly we were alarmed by the cries of convict women. We rushed on deck, and found the ship temporarily in possession of the male prisoners. On deck one man presented a blunderbus at me, and I shot him with my pistol. Some more of the insurgents were killed by others of our party. The convicts, seeing their intentions frustrated, ran forward as speedily as they came aft, and the ship's company and troops, now being collected together, began to vent their rage upon such of the convicts as were to be found on deck, in beating them with cutlasses and the butts of their muskets, until they were forced into the prison below. When the tumult had subsided we found twelve of the convicts killed and ten wounded, two of whom subsequently died."

The telegraph and the rapid mail services give shipowners a control over their ships which was wanting fifty years ago. This considerably reduces the responsibilities of shipmasters abroad, very much to the advantage of the owner and the detriment of the shipmasters' perquisite money; when it is possible for the captain of a ship to receive orders within twenty-four

hours of asking for them, though 13,000 miles distant from his owners, there can be no excuse for blunders, and such a voyage as the following would not be possible at this end of the century when the movements of a ship are known at Lloyd's almost every day while she is within sight of land.

The British ship *Lady Montague* returned to London in 1852 after a voyage of four years in duration. She was a vessel of 760 tons burden, and left Southampton in May 1848 laden with coals for Aden. Six weeks out the master died and the mate succeeded to the command. After discharging the coals, the ship proceeded to Bombay, thence to China, and at Cumsingmoon she embarked Chinese emigrants for California, *via* Callao, the whole number of persons on board when she sailed amounting to 500. Soon after sailing, the provisions turned putrid, and the water in wooden casks became foul, with the result that dysentery and fever broke out, and 193 persons died, 26 of them English seamen—only three of the crew survived. The ship having put into Hobart, Tasmania, to recruit, proceeded on her voyage, but illness broke out again, and by the time she reached Callao, the total of deaths was 274. Many of the Chinese jumped overboard to escape the horrors of the passage. At an inquiry held by the Board of Trade, the owner exonerated himself from blame by showing that he had only received one letter from the mate since the ship sailed, and that the officer had undertaken this passenger carrying entirely on his own responsibility.

Strangely enough, in 1899, notwithstanding advanced education, cable services, and all the other wonders of the age, the newspapers reported this singular

mistake. A ship sailed from Antwerp in December 1898 for Port Los Angeles, California. The master, either through insufficient care or obsolete charts, sailed his ship to Port Angeles, Washington, only discovering when he went to enter his ship at the Customs that he was 1200 miles north of his port of discharge!

There can be no doubt that the opening of the Suez Canal was worth a century of time in its influence upon our carrying trade. The Canal route has converted the whole Eastern trade into another Atlantic ferry. The opening of the Canal in November 1869, and the passage through it, has been often described. To-day, even this detail of navigation has been entirely altered from what it was a decade ago. The time in making the passages has been reduced from an average of about two and a half days to eighteen hours. Formerly, steamers could only travel by daylight, but now by the aid of gas buoys and electric lights, big steamers can keep moving all night. The tonnage passing through the Canal in 1870 did not exceed 500,000 tons; 9,000,000 is now about the figure. The value of the shares bought by Lord Beaconsfield at £4,000,000 sterling in 1875, has more than quadrupled, and 80 per cent. or more of the tonnage passing through the canal flies the English flag. What enormous money value this carrying trade of ours represents can be imagined when £1000 in canal dues is paid by any number of our mail steamers, the tolls being levied at the rate of 7s. 6d. a ton on the ship and 10 francs a passenger. The canal dredges to-day are as large as many of the great steamers that formed the opening procession, and there is a dredge—the largest in the world—

now cleaning the canal bottom at the rate of 1500 tons an hour, each bucket lifting two tons of material at a time.

Steamers, now, are built expressly for particular trades. Nothing shows the growth of our sea carrying organisation more than this. There are live cattle steamers designed to give all the deck space to the cattle, with just gangway enough for the crew to move about the ship to carry on the necessary work, which consists almost exclusively in keeping the ship clean. There are dead meat carriers built to stow thousands of tons weight of sheep in cold chambers, the refrigerating machinery of such vessels being as complicated and important to the voyage as is that of the main engines. There are bulk grain steamers, and actually bulk petroleum steamers! In the last, the petroleum is said to be safer than when carried in cases. The hold is divided into huge tanks well barricaded from the engines, and the tanks' bulkheads carried from the upper deck to the keelson, and always filled to the brim, the great object being to prevent the accumulation of vapour, as would occur if there was an air space. The crews of these vessels sign special articles by which they agree not to smoke on the voyage, and they load and unload the steamers by pumping the oil direct into or out of the tanks. There have been very few accidents on board of them—carrying coal from Newcastle, New South Wales, to San Francisco is proved by statistics to be much more dangerous, and there have been more ships on fire in this trade than in any other.

Sum up the changes that have taken place in a hundred years in cargo and passenger carrying,

and the results are these:—In the first quarter of the century specie and mails were carried in war-vessels, and the passenger trade, as a trade, did not exist. People who wanted to travel on the sea took passage in a sailing-vessel much as they would have got a lift in a carrier's cart. The well-to-do traveller engaged a “state-room” in the cuddy, and took care before he sailed to purchase a stock of fowls and the like for his table. Poor folk did not travel, or if they did, got on as best they could, stowing themselves among the cargo, or sleeping in blankets on the deck. Now, people take their passage in steamers, studying the shipping time-tables as they study train time-tables, and going by that steamer whose appointed date of arrival is at the most convenient hour for landing. Goods ordered by cable from ports 13,000 miles away from London, can be sent off the same night and delivered at their destination within six weeks of the receipt of the order. Fifty years ago six months would have been thought a remarkably short period within which to complete the transaction. Fifty years ago a hundred Americans crossed the Atlantic in the season, and half of them wrote to the papers an account of their voyage. Now thirty steamer lines cross the ferry, carrying every summer 150,000 Americans.

The difference in the tonnage of the mercantile marine of the British Empire in 1800 and 1899 is the difference between one million eight hundred thousand, and thirteen and a half millions. In 1800 we owned fewer than 18,000 ships: 2666 of them belonged to London, 796 of them to Liverpool, and 2161 to our colonies, Canada and the West Indies.

Australia was of too little importance to be counted. The tonnage owned in the Colonies to-day equals that of the parent state in 1800, and Australia alone, which in 1822 owned 3 vessels, now owns 500,000 tons of shipping.

CHAPTER VII

STEAM

Earliest Steamers—Beginning of the Atlantic Ferry—Steam War Vessels.

WHEN peace was established, men had time to look around, and suddenly—for it was suddenly, considering how slowly people moved then—it dawned upon the minds of shipowners that steam was something more than a plaything.

Twenty years before the century opened, a Shropshire ironmaster had a small iron steam-vessel plying on the Severn, and half-a-dozen experimenters were ruining themselves and their friends by trying patents of their own in steam propulsion; but in March 1802 William Symington *did* undoubtedly inaugurate the era of steam.

The story of the *Charlotte Dundas*, the little tug built by Symington for Lord Dundas for use on the Forth and Clyde Canal, has often been told. There is a detailed history of her, and of much besides that is curious on the subject, in *A Sketch of the Origin and Progress of Steam Navigation*, by Bennett Woodcroft. The story of this, the first practical steamer, suggests a picture of Symington hopefully trying his best to keep cool that nothing might go wrong; not doubtful of

his steamer, but horribly nervous in the presence of the gentlefolk, who would probably laugh and sneer at him as a dreamer of dreams, if presently, when he put her full-speed ahead in the face of the gale and with the heavy barges, a piston or a crank, or something should give way, and the whole business turn out an abject failure. But he had experimented a little before, having made a tiny steamer for an Edinburgh banker—her engines can still be seen in a Glasgow museum—and so he was pretty sure of the capabilities of the *Charlotte Dundas*.

The run to Port Glasgow was $19\frac{1}{2}$ miles; it was blowing hard, right ahead, and many large vessels were lying at anchor, wind and weather bound, yet in six hours, at the rate of $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles an hour, the steamer towing two barges of 70 tons weight made the passage, delighting Lord Dundas and his friends so much that his Lordship wrote directly in enthusiastic fashion to his Grace of Bridgewater of young Symington's invention. Not altogether Symington's though, for the engine was a combination of patents, thus: Steam acted on both sides of the piston, this was Watt's patent; the piston worked a connecting rod and crank, Pickards' invention; but the union of the crank to the axis of Miller's stern paddle-wheel was Symington's own idea, and the blending of these inventions and the practicable application of them on this occasion was Symington's. To Lord Dundas is due the credit of having faith and enterprise to support the engineer. The point to be remembered is that Symington had, for the first time, given rotatory motion to his paddle by the attachment of the crank to its axis without the interposition of a beam, the germ this of all that has

come since in adapting steam to the propulsion of ships.

The Duke of Bridgewater forthwith ordered six tug-boats for his canals, and Symington thought he was made for life; but the Duke's co-directors disagreed with such new-fangled notions, and, without doubt, the paddlewheel would stir up the canal mud. Just then the Duke of Bridgewater died; no one seemed to want any more steamers; presently enthusiasm died out, and the *Charlotte Dundas* was laid up in a creek of the canal, an object of curiosity to the idle. Symington died in 1831, having received £125 from the Privy Purse as a reward for his public services.

Fulton, meanwhile, having come across from America, seen Symington, and been shown by him everything there was to see, in August 1807 the public hear of the *Clermont* making her successful 5 miles an hour trip, from New York to Albany, and there is much talk of Mr Fulton, the clever American who has invented a practicable steamboat. Then these inventors say and write bitter things of one another, and much ink is wasted by their friends as to how many ideas have been filched, and how many legitimately conceived.

There is no doubt Fulton made the most of his visit to Glasgow, but the *Clermont* was so great an improvement on the *Charlotte Dundas* that Fulton was certainly to all intents an originator, however much he may have learned from the other. Eight years later Fulton died, having, in the meanwhile, invented the torpedo, and seen, ready for launching, an American steam war vessel, built from plans designed by himself, and having experimented with, and actually built, a submarine boat, that if not as great a success as the

modern attempts in this direction are reported by their inventors to be, was no more a dream than our English engineers represent modern submarine vessels to be.

Fulton's *Clermont* set our people to work again, and in 1812 came Henry Bell of Helensburgh, with the *Comet*, "that elegant, safe, and commodious steam vessel to ply between Glasgow and Greenock, 40 ft. long, of 30 tons burden, and with an engine of three horse power."

Between Robert Fulton and Henry Bell there are conflicting claims. Certainly Bell did, in 1800, submit a memorial to the Admiralty on the "practicability and utility of steam as a marine propelling power for use against wind and tide in rivers or in seas," and certainly the Admiralty did reply that after careful consideration, "my Lords are of opinion that the idea is of no value in trans-marine navigation." So Bell sent his plans to America, and from that day to this people argue and adduce proofs on both sides as to whether Fulton or Bell or Symington was the inventor of the steamer. Fulton, though an American by birth, was a Scotsman by descent, and Symington and Bell were both Scotsmen, so that Scotland can with some reason claim the real honour of the invention, and beyond this point I am not authority enough to express an opinion.

Four years after the *Comet* started, people were outgrowing the fear of being blown up by boilers, 600 passengers journeying daily on the Clyde in steamers, and from this date onward, steam ferry boats increased in number rapidly. In 1814 the first steamboat was launched on the Thames, and in America and Canada many such vessels were running.

In the same year steamers began to put to sea, and

William Denny, of Dumbarton, engined the *Marjory*, which steamed from Dumbarton to the Thames, and was plying on the river until Russian war time. A year later the *Mersey* had its steamer, and in 1819 the *Savannah*, a full-rigged ship of 300 tons, fitted with an auxiliary paddle steam-engine, made the passage from Savannah to Liverpool in 29 days, the first ocean-going steamship. She was built in New York for a sailing ship, but was later fitted with an engine, and used her steam only when the wind failed. After discharging her cargo she sailed and steamed to St Petersburg, and thence back to Savannah, and was wrecked a year later.

In 1826 the *Enterprise* was built on the Thames, engined with a "beautiful copper boiler" by Maudslay, and taking her departure from Falmouth, made Calcutta in 113 days, the first steamer to reach India, and this was the first long steamer voyage.

Told in this way, the progress of steam would make of the chapter a mere list of dates, yet the figures are expressive in their way. The boy, creeping unwillingly to school, who stopped on the canal bank to see Symington's tug start upon her experimental trip, looked on at what was then no less a wonder of the age, than a successful aerial passenger vessel would be to us; the lover taking his mistress for an afternoon trip upon the Clyde in one of a dozen steamers, might have pointed out the *Charlotte Dundas* lying rotting in a creek, and told the story of how he had seen this steamer make her first trip when he was a schoolboy; the fathers of many people who will read this book were born before it was considered safe for a steamer to go out of sight of land.

In a newspaper of 1814 a description of a new steamer to run between Glasgow and Greenock is given. She was called the *Clyde*, was 75 ft. long, had an engine of 12 horse power, and could steam four and a half miles an hour. The paper tells us with wonderment how it costs £40 a day to work her, the engines consuming twelve hundredweight of coal each day, and that the "apparatus" complete cost about £700. She had accommodation for 250 passengers and a crew of five men. Her paddles, sixteen in number, were in two wheels of 9 ft. in diameter, and this vessel and two others, then forming the Clyde fleet of steamers, had played such havoc with road travelling that the service of post chaises was being reduced, the tolls let for £1400 less than formerly, four out of eight stage coaches had been laid aside, and sixty less horses were on the road. The cost of travelling was, in the after cabin, 10s., and in the fore cabin, 2s. 6d., the distance travelled 22 miles, and the fares by mail and stage coaches, 10s. and 12s.

In the same paper an account is given of a new invention, which it was evidently thought would presently do away with these nasty, dangerous, paddle steamers. An excise officer of Wick had designed a vessel to be propelled by oars instead of paddles. These oars were so constructed that they could be worked by hand or by the aid of a small engine, "the engine being connected by a series of levers with the oars which row the boat just as men do! A much safer plan!"

Three years later, another paper records with certain satisfaction a disaster to a venturesome steamer. No one was injured, and the accident might serve as a warning to people not to trust themselves in such dangerous vessels. This is what happened:—The

Regent, steam packet, bound from the Thames to Margate—a rash voyage to undertake in 1817—was burnt to the water's edge off Whitstable. The reporter of the time wrote:—"The gale of wind being strong, blew the chimney flue away, and the woodwork that is nearly breast high from the deck at the bottom of the flue, for the purpose of keeping the people near the chimney from burning themselves, caught fire, then the captain made for the land and got every one safely on shore."

In 1818 readers were informed "that the time is fast approaching when the grand intercourse with Europe will not be, as at present, through Eastern America, but through the great rivers that communicate with the ocean. The navigation of these rivers is fast coming under the control of the steamboat, an invention that promises to be a great advantage. Their average speed, heavily laden, is 60 miles a day, and about 25 of them of from 50 to 400 tons burden are navigating American rivers. On the Clyde, in Scotland, they have during the past summer been extensively used, even as many as 20 of them being employed. Some of them actually voyaged from Glasgow to Inveraray, partly through a stormy sea, performing the journey of 110 miles in sixty hours, and touching at stopping places with almost the regularity of a stage coach. No serious accident has yet occurred, and if the boilers of cast-iron should give way, a piece of cloth is firmly wedged into the hole, and the vessel proceeds without any danger to the passengers."

Such was the passenger steamer in the first quarter of the century. What was the Admiralty (slower to move than the merchant shipowner) doing with the new

invention? When George III. died in January 1820, the navy estimates from £18,000,000 sterling in the middle of the last war, dropped to £2,500,000, the number of seamen and marines from 145,000 fell to 20,000. Now was the chance for the naval constructor to give less attention to questions of armament and more to improvements in the speed and sailing qualities of ships. By 1827 the *Enterprise* had made her voyage to Calcutta, the *Curacoa* had made a trip to the West Indies, the *United Kingdom* was trading regularly between London and the Clyde, and there were harbour and river steamers enough to diminish sensibly the receipts of the toll-bars. Then the Admiralty decided that the steamer was beyond the experimental stage, and could be made of some use, though by no means so reliable as to occupy anything but a very minor place in the scheme of naval defence. Half-a-dozen years before this period, fourteen or fifteen small tugboats and harbour-steamers had been introduced into the navy, and steam in the mail packet service was tolerated. Brunel (he who laid down the blockmaking machinery) was responsible for this innovation. The *Comet*, says one authority, was the first of these little steamers, the *Monkey*, tug, of about 200 tons and 80 horse power, afloat until the sixties, was, if not the first, the second. It is equally doubtful which was the first regular steam war vessel. Miles, writing in 1841, says the *African*, about 1827, was the first steamer to appear on the official list. Between 1823 and 1827 Maudslay engined half-a-dozen steamers for the Government, and one of these at least (the *Dee*) was afloat till the seventies. In 1827 an order was given for thirty steam brigs of war and one steam frigate. Of

course all these vessels were driven by paddles, and their engines were on the well-known side lever principle.

When George IV. died in June 1830, out of 588 ships on the Navy List in commission, building and in ordinary, there were 12 steamers; and when William IV. died, seven years later, out of 575 ships, 54 were steam vessels. In the same year 1 steamer was on the stocks, while 14 line of battle ships and 43 smaller sailing vessels were building.

During the second quarter of the century steamers made such rapid progress that, from building with doubt and hesitation, ocean-going wooden paddle-wheel steamers in the early thirties, merchant shipowners were adopting the new-fangled screw propellers in the early forties, accepting iron as a material for ships before the fifties, and at the close of the half century were beginning to regard sails as of secondary consideration for the fast passenger and mail service.

In the Colonies steam early came into use, the *Royal William* in 1831, a 350-ton steamer of 240 horse power, was built in Canada, and she took about six weeks on the passage from Quebec to Liverpool, sailing part of the way. In the same year a steamer called the *Sophia Jane* went a longer voyage. I have not seen her name mentioned in any book, yet she made the first steam voyage to Australia and the longest trip under steam, down almost to the fifties.

Her history is worth telling, because it is part of the story of Thames shipbuilding. She was the joint property of Messrs Barnes & Miller, and was built to run between London Bridge and Gravesend by Mr Evans.

When the little steamer (she was of 256 tons burden

with engines of 50 horse power) was first placed on the ferry service, her owners were involved in an action at law, to prove their right to navigate the vessel, not being free of the river. They won their action from the Watermen's Company, and soon the first Gravesend steam ferry was started. In Leigh's "New Picture of London" (1825) we are told that the *Thames* was the first steamer to ply on the river, and she was brought from Glasgow by Mr Dodd, "and since then several boats are employed during the summer season." The *Sophia Jane*, up to 1828, was one of these, then she took longer trips, running for some time between Portsmouth and Plymouth, then from Liverpool to the Isle of Man, then from London to Calais, and finally made her great voyage, arriving at Port Jackson Heads in May 1831, three months after leaving the Thames; and she was running on the Australian coast until wrecked in the fifties. No fuss was made of this long voyage, though it was not until 1838 that the Atlantic crossing by steam grew into a service.

Between the voyage of the *Savannah* and the year 1838, at irregular intervals, steamers had made the passage—one vessel, the *Royal William*, taking forty days to do the trip. This was in 1833; in 1838 a second *Royal William*, the first steamer to sail from Liverpool, made her first voyage, and was succeeded a few months later by the *Liverpool*. This vessel made one or two good passages, doing the homeward trip on one occasion in a few hours over the fortnight.

Two companies were now formed, and the beginning of the great Atlantic service was at hand. The Great Western Company was floated for the express purpose of building at Bristol and despatching

therefrom at regular intervals the steamship *Great Western*, designed as the largest and most powerful ship afloat. She was built of wood, was 212 ft. long, of 1340 tons and 700 horse power, engines by Maudslay. The largest ship afloat to-day is the White Star steamer *Oceanic*, considerably more than twice the length of the *Great Western*, nearly thrice her speed, and more than twelve times her tonnage. As soon as it became known that the *Great Western* was laid down, a company was formed to establish an Atlantic line from Liverpool. This was the British and American Steam Navigation Company, who ordered the *British Queen* from Curling & Young, Thames shipbuilders, with which to inaugurate the service. This vessel could not be launched in time to start with the Bristol Line, so John Laird, who was the working Director of the Liverpool Company, chartered the *Sirius*. She belonged to the Irish Channel Steam Packet Company, and was built at Leith by Menzies, was of 703 tons, 270 horse power, and a speed of eight and a half knots.

The *Sirius* sailed from Liverpool on April 4th, and from Queenstown on April 5th, 1838, and arrived at New York on the 23rd. The *Great Western* left Bristol three days later than the *Sirius*, and arrived in New York harbour less than two hours after her, the race and the arrival of the two ships creating the greatest excitement. This was the first and last Atlantic voyage of the little *Sirius*, and she was sent back to the less important Irish Channel service in which she remained until 1847, when she was wrecked near Queenstown, drowning many persons. The country people, where she went ashore, were

such accomplished wreckers, that in a day or two after the disaster they had carted away from the sea coast nearly every plank of her timbers.

The *Great Western* may be regarded as the first regular Atlantic steamer. She made altogether 64 trips, after her first voyage reducing her average time to twelve days some few hours. The *British Queen* for the rival Company took the place of the *Sirius*. She was of 1860 tons, 275 ft. long, and of 700 horse power; and a second steamer, the *President*, was a year or two later put on the service. In 1840 this steamer was lost, and her loss led to the winding-up of the Company; the *British Queen* was sold to a foreign firm, and the *Great Western* with another famous steamer, the *Great Britain*, next encountered more formidable rivalry arising from the enterprise of Samuel Cunard, George Burns, and David MacIver, the founders of the Cunard Company.

The service was begun with four wooden paddle steamers, the *Britannia*, *Arcadia*, *Columbia*, and *Caledonia*. They were each about 230 ft. long, 1100 tons, and 700 horse power; and the *Britannia* made the first trip, sailing from Liverpool for Boston on July 4th, 1840. This was the first regularly subsidised line of sail steamers, the annual subsidy being £60,000, the passage money was thirty-eight guineas, and the steamers called at Halifax *en route*. The *Britannia* made her first outward trip in fourteen days, eight hours, this time including a few hours' stay at Halifax. From this time onward the steam traffic rapidly increased, and the rest of the story records the change from paddles to screw, from wood to iron, from a passage of more than a fortnight to one

of less than a week, from the rivalry of two companies to that of more than a score.

The monument at Boulogne to Frederick Sauvage, truthfully or not, tells the world that a Frenchman invented the screw propeller, and there are, at least, half-a-dozen other claimants—Petit Smith, Ericsson, Woodcroft, are the three names best known to Englishmen. Ericsson was a Swede living in England, and in 1837 he built the *F. B. Ogden* as an experiment, but our Admiralty would have nothing to do with him, so he then built the *Robert F. Stockton* for the Americans, and she propelled herself across the Atlantic. Her inventor spent the rest of his life turning out screw steamers and other inventions for the country that had welcomed him. Then, in 1839, Petit Smith built the *Archimedes*, and in three years the thing was an accepted fact.

The Admiralty had long seen the danger as a target of a paddle-wheel steamer, and so, when the screw was in early use the navy adopted it, almost keeping pace with the merchant steamer in this respect. Our naval experts were, however, much more backward in *trusting* the screw without sails, preferring to stick to wind and canvas, as, after all, affording the most natural, reliable, and desirable means of propulsion, if only on account of its antiquity ; the propeller was accordingly long used as an auxiliary only.

Three years after the Queen came to the throne, we had in commission fifteen steamers and seven others building, and in 1842, after a series of trials between the *Rattler*, a screw steamer of 200 horse power, and the *Alecto*, a paddle steamer of similar power, the Admiralty led off grandly by ordering the *Ajax*

and the *Blenheim* to be fitted with screws, and the *Dauntless*, *Encounter*, and *Arrogant* to be built as screw frigates. In the same year the steam sloop of war *Driver* left England, and circumnavigated the globe with her screw propeller; and then the merchants, who up to this period were, as a body, in favour of paddles, soon changed their opinions, and the propeller henceforth was applied to all new steamers of large size.

In 1845 the largest vessel to date, having six masts, five of them fore-and-aft rigged, left Liverpool for New York. She was fitted with the screw propeller, and made the passage in fifteen days. This was the *Great Britain*, remembered by every old sailor, and argued about in every ship's forecastle. Her tonnage, the number of her masts, her rig, and every part of her from truck to keelson, to judge from the talk of men who claim to have sailed in her, having been altered in every voyage she made. There is reason to remember her, for she was one of the first big iron steamships. She only made three voyages across the Atlantic. In September 1846, on the homeward voyage, she ran ashore in Dundrum Bay, and lay there till the following summer. She was got off and refitted as a three-masted steamship, and created a sensation for a time, as the crack ship in the Australian trade, but in her old age she was converted into a sailing-vessel, and ultimately ended as a coal hulk at the Falkland Islands. She was of 2984 tons, was 322 ft. long, 51 ft. breadth of beam, and her engines were of 1000 horse power. Nothing like her had been seen, or was to be attempted, till Brunel designed his *Leviathan*.

Having reached the middle of the century and the beginning of a new departure in shipbuilding, it is worth while putting on record the progress in figures of steam from 1815, when it may fairly be said to have begun, to 1850, when the screw propeller and the use of iron brought about a new order of things. In 1815 there were 10 steamers afloat, their united tonnage 1633 tons; in 1820 there were 43, with a tonnage of 7243 tons; in 1825, 168, tonnage 20,287; in 1830, 315, tonnage 33,444. The increase went on, the steamers and the tonnage nearly doubling every five years, until in 1850 there were 1350 steamers afloat with a tonnage of 187,631 tons.

Among others, Mr Ditchburn, a well-known builder of wooden ships on the Thames, early in the forties, saw that iron was to be the material of the future. He took into partnership Mr C. Mare, and started a Thames iron shipbuilding works. In ten years the partners had built in iron, from small ferry boats to big ocean-going steamers, some hundreds of vessels. This firm built the little Royal yacht *Fairy*, one of the first screw steamers in the service. She was 312 tons, 128 horse power, was engined by Penn, and was the yacht on board which the Queen reviewed the Baltic Fleet in 1854. She remained on the *Navy List* until 1868, when she was replaced by the *Alberta*. By 1840 the Napiers had built several iron steamers for use on the Thames. In '43 the *Great Britain* was laid, in '50 the *City of Glasgow* made her first voyage from Glasgow to New York—an iron screw steamer of 1600 tons, soon after to be transferred to the Liverpool and New York service as the first vessel of the Liverpool and Philadelphia Steamship Company. This Company was afterwards called by

the name of the founder, the Inman Line, was converted early in the nineties into the American Line, and the firm are owners of the *City of Paris* and the *City of New York*, steamers which during the late Spanish-American war became the American cruisers *Yale* and *Harvard*.

The first regular iron screw steam-collier—a type of vessel to be seen in every harbour in the world, and more plentiful, I suppose, than any build of ship afloat—was the *James Bowes*, launched from Palmer's Yard (Jarrow), on the Tyne, in July 1852. For six hundred years sailing vessels had carried coal from Newcastle; the trip between that port and the Thames frequently occupied a month and more, to carry and deliver the cargo. The *John Bowes* carried 600 tons of coal, and discharged it at Blackwall between midnight on a Wednesday and the following Saturday afternoon. The Palmers were proud of the great undertaking. The steamer, says a contemporary paper, required no less than 160 tons of iron and 200,000 rivets to build her.

The first of a set of five screw steamers to carry the mails between England and Africa was the *Forerunner*. The points worth remembering in her history are these:

She was built on the banks of the Mersey by Mr Macgregor Laird, at his yard at Birkenhead. This was in 1852, and the *Forerunner* was the beginning of the revival of iron shipbuilding on the Mersey, where it had originated more than twenty years before. The *Forerunner* was a barque-rigged iron screw steamer 160 ft. long, and had two engines of 50 horse power each. She made the round voyage between Plymouth and Sierra Leone in 57 days, having in that time called at five

intermediate ports, encountered severe weather, and caused people to shake their heads at the idea of wire rigging—the first mention I can find of wire being depended upon in an ocean-going ship.

Four days from Gibraltar some of her standing gear carried away in the gale, and her foremast, mainmast, and funnel went by the board. They made shift for a funnel with headless casks, and at half-speed reached the Rock, where the steamer was detained a week refitting—and how the old fogies *did* rail about the dangers of the new-fangled wire rigging!

In 1852 the firm of Denny Brothers, of Dumbarton, were building steamships for the Australian Mail Company's Service. The *Sydney*, launched in July, was a good type of these screw steamers. She was 216 ft. long, 300 horse power, and 1500 tons register. The vessels were, of course, square-rigged, placing much dependence on their sails; the average number of saloon passengers carried was 150. They coaled at St Vincent and the Cape of Good Hope, the average length of their passage being 65 days.

Some of the best and prettiest types of passenger ships, lasting from the sixties to the early eighties, were those built for the Australian trade, and named after the English counties, the *Somersetshire*, *Hampshire*, etc. They were fine frigate-built, square-rigged, auxiliary screw vessels, of about 300 horse power, and with a gross tonnage of 2400, and were the "correct thing" for well-to-do Australians and Englishmen bound out from home to take passage in before the Orient Liners and similar mail steamers ran them off.

The *La Plata*, built for the Messrs Cunard to compete with the Collins Line in the Atlantic service, was one of

the crack steamers in the early fifties. The Cunarder's *Asia* and *Africa* had been beaten by the Collins steamers by a few hours, so the Cunard Company built on the Clyde, at a cost of £125,000, the *Arabia* and *Persia* to compete. Then the *Amazon* was burnt at sea, and the Royal Mail Company bought the *Arabia* to take her place, and renamed her the *La Plata*. She could steam fifteen miles an hour, was a brig-rigged paddle-boat of about 2300 tons burden, and her length was 285 ft. In 1852 she was the fastest ocean steamer in the world.

The launch of the *Wave Queen* at Millwall in 1852, as an iron coastal passenger steamer, marked a considerable advance, for though more than 200 ft. in length, she was only 13 ft. in breadth, and her fine lines made her a fast and very handsome vessel.

How long these vessels of the forties and early fifties remained afloat, and in what remote parts of the world we hear of their endings! In the thirties the Hudson's Bay Company ordered the *Beaver* to be built for them on the Thames. She was a little vessel of only about 110 tons, and was engined by Boulton & Watt of Birmingham with two 35 horse power side-lever engines. She made the first steamer passage round Cape Horn, doing the passage from London to Astoria, Oregon, in 163 days, and was the pioneer steamer of the Pacific. She ran for years carrying fur for the Company; it was on one of these trips that coal was discovered by her at Vancouver Island, and in the gold rush to California in 1849 she carried thousands of miners. In 1888 she struck a rock off Barrant Inlet, and in the early nineties her timbers and her copper were made into souvenirs by a Vancouver firm.

Let us go back to what the Admiralty was doing, and see how the Royal dockyards looked, and what progress we had made since that great engineering feat, when 1400 men with the aid of blocks and tackle hauled the *Kent* up on a landing slip. It is going back, for the Admiralty would not have iron—the screw propeller was adopted at a comparatively early date by "My Lords," but in the first half of the century iron warships were not dreamt of in Admiralty philosophy.

In September 1852 was launched at Pembroke H.M.S. *Windsor Castle*, 140 guns, at this date "the largest ship afloat in the whole world." Her length between perpendiculars was 240 ft. 6 in., her burden in tons 3759, and her displacement when ready for sea 5571 tons. Her engines for driving the screw propeller were 800 horse power. She was originally intended for a 120-gun sailing ship, but while building it was determined to adopt the new means of propulsion and increase her armament. To do this, it was necessary to cut her in two. A newspaper of the time thus describes the operation:—"This remarkable and unheard-of process was accomplished by cutting the ship asunder at 'dead flat' or the midship section, launching the after half, weighing 2000 tons, 23 ft., and building the new part in." This was a sign of the times. The Admiralty had determined that steam, as an auxiliary to sailing, was in future to be on all their ships; the screw propeller had done away with the exposed paddle-wheels, and that other defect, the paddle-boxes, practically depriving the ship of her broadside armament; while Sir Charles Napier's suggestion to put the engines below the water-line overcame another serious objection—the danger from shot—though the Admiralty still re-

mained dubious as to the possibility of steering a ship with a propeller in her stern.

But dockyards remained practically the same—the men employed were still wood-workers. They built wooden ships in covered slips, and so many acres of docks and basins were added to the Royal dockyards; but the visitor in 1800, in 1810, in 1825, in 1835, in 1845, in 1850, would have seen much the same at the last date as he would have seen at the first. I have read descriptions and studied books and plans of each of these dates, and can find no difference worth recording in them. In 1817 they hauled the *Kent* upon a slip to repair her; ropes, and blocks, and capstans, and plenty of men were the means employed; in 1852 they cut the *Windsor Castle* in halves and hauled her apart, and shipwrights with handsaws, and ropes, and blocks, and capstans, and men to pull, were still the means. Lieutenant Miles, in 1844, summarising the progress made since the peace, writes :—

"In our dockyards, ships, and arsenals, the genius of metamorphosis was at work; masts, rigging, sails, ordnance, implements, and instruments underwent revision; the cable started from its tough hempen coils into links of solid iron; everything, in fact, of a tangible nature, to which the zealous inventor could attach a new idea, was remodelled or remade, from the patent dock and floating lighthouse to the patent floating buoy; from transom bolts and fastenings to the copper sheathing nail. In naval architecture, also, improvements of an important nature had been effected; the weak, defenceless stern, the ill-fortified bow, gave place to forms uniting strength, solidity, and beauty; and as regards construction, certain arrangements were made in the

disposition of the materials which compose the frames of ships, by substituting for the rectangular system a series of triangles united by riders and trusses, the openings between the timbers being filled in with pieces of wood, and caulked over."

But observe, no mention of iron, no mention of great rifled guns, no suspicion that masts, sails, and rigging were to be in a generation reformed out of existence. There were at this time fifty-two dockyards and naval establishments. These were at Woolwich, Chatham, Sheerness, Portsmouth, Plymouth, and Pembroke; at Deal, Yarmouth, Gibraltar, Malta, Canada, Halifax, Bermuda, Antigua, Jamaica, the Cape of Good Hope, Trincomalee, and Bombay were smaller establishments. There were the packet establishments, the chief at Falmouth, besides the victualling, medical, transport, and marine departments. The men employed in the dockyards were conductors of wood-mills, lead-mills, saw-mills, foremen of shipwrights, plumbers, and so on, but never a mention of iron-workers—if we except a chief engineer at Woolwich and his assistant, the only official of this branch of whom mention is made—but Woolwich was at this time provided with "an extensive manufactory for the construction of steam machinery, and at Pembroke a regular department was just instituted for the building of steam vessels."

At Portsmouth there was a basin of two acres in area, with four large dry docks opening into it and two others open to the harbour. There were covered building slips, wood and slate roofed, with plenty of windows in them, built on the principle of diagonal trussing, introduced by Sir Robert Seppings. These were the

pride of the yard—the slips and the block-making machinery were still its sights.

At Plymouth the breakwater, of which the first stone was laid in 1812, was still being completed in the later forties, and at Devonport wooden ships were repairing, and new ones building, and so with all the yards. The "Commissioners of the Naval Inquiry," appointed in 1805, after three years' work, sent in fifteen reports in which the whole want of system in the civil departments of the service, the chicanery, the ignorance, and the extravagance of those responsible were exposed, and from 1808 the work of reform began. In 1832 the different civil departments were organised into five separate branches with responsible heads, and a number of useless subordinate officials were abolished, the business of selling and buying being put into one department, that of the Director of Naval Contracts. The fruits of this can be best understood by the difference between two sets of figures as given in the *Naval Chronicle* for 1817 and in the *Times* for 1853. In the first period the establishment of officers in Portsmouth Yard cost the country £50,000; in the second period, though there was a steam factory with six higher grade officials in it, the cost was only £22,600. From paying the workmen in a dozen different ways, in 1850, a permanent staff was established entitled to a pension for long service and good conduct. In Portsmouth, where the dockyard has grown until it has become a town of 300 acres of basins, docks, building slips, workshops and factories, there are 13 large docks; now nearly 9000 men are employed.

In an article on Portsmouth in war-time, published in 1854, the writer tells of the bustle of the yard, of the crowds of shipping at Spithead, of the dozens of wherries,

of bumboats, of men-o'-war cutters darting hither and thither all over the harbour—but it all amounts to a crowd of ships and boats alongside the yard jetties, or lying off the Motherbank ; the steamer is scarcely mentioned in the article, and the date when it was written might as easily have been 1804 as 1854.

CHAPTER VIII

CUSTOMS OF THE SEA

Old Ceremonies—Sea Songs—Etiquette—Punishments—Superstitions—The Sea Language.

THE customs of the sea life are, of course, changing with the change in ships. The language of the sailor, sea traditions, laws unwritten but, hitherto, severely observed, governing life on ship-board, the etiquette of the sea, in fact, are dying with the century, but some yet survive: the steel sailing ship is still a “windjammer”; and though so many of our merchant seamen are foreigners, they are mostly of nationalities that are free of the masonry of the ocean.

Men no longer object to going to sea on a Friday, nor do they prefer Sunday because it is lucky. With owners Sunday is the favourite sailing day, for to arrive or to leave port on this day means no time lost in unloading or loading, and on the coast it is contrived as much as possible that small steamers should be at sea on this day. Can it be that, after all, this Friday and Sunday superstition was invented, or at all events encouraged, by bygone generations of shipowners for mercenary reasons? I have known sailors and the sea for five-and-twenty years, and never met a man who would not sooner have sailed every voyage on a

Friday than be hauling lines and making sail on Sunday.

Occasionally, though very seldom, the ceremony of shaving on crossing the Equator is observed. It was always an objectionable piece of buffoonery, but the wretched imitations which nowadays sometimes take place on some outward-bound Australian passenger ships are mostly got up by the passengers themselves ; the modern forecastle sailor having too much work and too little to eat, to have heart enough to originate anything that would deprive him of an hour or two of his watch below. The performance has been much too often described to justify me wasting space upon it, but the ceremony, as we read of it now, is gentle fun compared with this custom of making a crew free of the Tropics on first crossing the line, as described in some verses written by J. Kirkpatrick, M.D., in 1750 :—

“ Why should the Muse the Tropic past omit,
Or sailors’ custom of observing it
Where travellers, when first arrived, advance
To buy their freedom, sugar, rum, and nantz ;
But if pale poverty the wight surround,
Or surly he refuse his quart and pound,
If he assert the hardship of his cause,
And rave of British rights and English laws ;
With little form his slender plea they try,
Who must be moisten’d if his jury’s dry.
Strait on a well-pois’d pole is culprit swung,
His arms embrace the rope by which it’s slung.
Aloft ! they cry, and lo, aloft he’s soar’d,
The highest mortal we survey on board ;
But let his future fate inform us all,
The highest have the greatest height to fall.
Amain ! they cry, and downward swift he slides,
Cuts the thin air, and wond’ring flood divides ;

Again aloft he does not long remain.
Alas ! he rises but to fall again ;
Thrice the blithe crew the diving miser see,
And the third plunge completely sets him free.
Joyous I yield my mulct, with this remark,
'I'll treat ten crews, ere I'll invite a shark.'"

I have not heard of any instance of "burning the dead horse" within the last few years, nor have I seen the ceremony so often described in print as that of shaving, common both on men-of-war and merchantmen fifty years ago. "The dead horse" is typical of one month's pay advanced to a seaman when he ships, and which after twenty-eight days at sea has been worked out. The horse's body is made out of a cask, sometimes covered with old tarred canvas; swabs and oakum form the tail and the mane; and, if the thing is meant to be very elaborate, a couple of bottles, with their hollow ends filled with phosphorus, are inserted for eyes. Then comes a procession round the deck, usually in the second dog watch, to the sound of a well-known chanty, sung as a dirge. After the procession, the horse is put up to auction, when the sailors have an opportunity of displaying their wit. Finally, a rope is passed round the horse, and to the rude melody of the long-drawn chorus, it is pulled slowly up to the foreyard-arm, while both watches join in singing :—

" Now, old horse, your time has come,
And we say so, for we know so !
Altho' many a race you've won,
Oh, poor old man !
You're going now to say good-bye,
And we say so, for we know so ;
Poor old horse, you're going to die!"

And thus through many verses until it reaches the yardarm, where a hand is waiting to cut it adrift. Sometimes as the horse leaves the rail it is set on fire; but this detail depends on circumstances. Anyhow, as it splashes into the sea, the men's hearts grow lighter with the knowledge that their dead horse has gone, and that pay has begun. Essentially a rite belonging wholly to the forecastle hands, "the after guard" seldom or never took notice of or part in it. A ghastly story is still extant of how, on one dark night of storm, an unpopular and tyrannical officer, coming forward while the ceremony was in full swing, and foolishly attempting to stop the proceedings, was promptly knocked on the head by the exasperated men, lashed to the horse, and then swung aloft to where the sailor crouched, knife in hand; the rope was cut, and the officer thus met his doom.

Sea chanties are peculiar to the merchant service. Some of these songs go back to the time of the French War, but many of them have an American origin—the New Orleans cotton trade, when niggers were "screwing cotton all de day," having taught our sailors many good choruses. The American Civil War inspired several other songs, or rather, as for example, in "Marching through Georgia," the sailors finding the adaptability of a marching chorus to a capstan tramp, took to singing soldiers' songs on shipboard.

Music in the Royal Navy is now confined to an admiral's band or the calls of a marine bugler; from Marryat we know how the anchor used to be weighed with a fiddler sitting on the capstan, but the boatswain's pipe and the words "One, two, three," or some similar unmusical sounds, are all that for ordinary rope

pulling the discipline of the service now permits. Occasionally, in the half-occupied East and West India docks, or in a foreign harbour, a chorus can still be heard from some merchantman weighing her anchor, but the steam winch is rapidly displacing the capstan and the windlass, and long before the end of the twentieth century chanty singing will have become a memory.

I am well assured that, but for the chanty singers, the modern sea-story writers—Russell, Conrad, J. A. Barry, Bullen, and the rest of them—would never have told their delightful stories. It is impossible to conceive any one finding an atom of romance in the sea-life as seen from the forecastle of a merchant ship. The sordid round of rust-chipping, painting, and polishing that makes up the work on board a modern steel cargo-carrier, soon kills the imagination of the sea-apprentice. These men who have been to sea, and from their experience have spun yarns, weaving bright coloured threads into them, have been inspired to think and feel by the lilt and the roll of the music of the waters.

How different are these sea songs to the rubbish of the music halls! Girls in tights waving Union Jacks, and talking of "Shivering my timbers"—an expression unheard of in the annals of the sea—sing such rubbish as "Hilley hauley ho!" which is Greek in the ears of sailors, but is popularly supposed to be a sea song! Chanties are mainly composed for their usefulness, and not for the beauty of their music or the sense of their verses; but there are songs that from their literary value are worthy of being sung anywhere. Here is a capstan chanty that comes from the States. Imagine

a stalwart nigger rolling out this address to the Shenandoah River :—

“Oh Shanadore, I love your daughter,
A’way, you rolling river !
Oh Shanadore, I long to hear you,
Across the wild Missouri.

Oh Shanadore, I’ll ne’er forget you,
A’way, you rolling river !
Till the day I die, I’ll love you ever ;
Across the wild Missouri.”

And no more beautiful sea song has been written than the wail of the north country sailor :—

“And it’s home, deary home ! Oh ! it’s home I want to be,
My topsails are hoisted, and I am bound to sea,
For the oak, and the ash, and the bonny birchen tree,
They are all growing green in the North Countree !”

The usefulness of these songs is in getting a long or a short pull, a strong pull, and a pull altogether. For instance, even landsmen can understand how at the word “haul” in this verse, every man puts his weight on the rope.

“Haul on the bowline, the bonny main-top bowline,
Haul the bowline, the bowline, *Haul !*
Haul on the bowline, oh bully for the bowline,
Haul the bowline, the bowline, *Haul !*”

On a moonlight night, across the placid waters of Sydney harbour, the green-clad hills of its shores echoing the chorus of the chanty singer, I heard, not many weeks ago, from the room in which I was writing, this old familiar anchor-weighing song :—

"We are homeward bound to Liverpool town,
Good-bye, fare ye well. Good-bye, fare ye well.
Get up, Jack, and let John sit down.
Good-bye, fare ye well,
We are homeward bound, good-bye, fare ye well."

The same singer had opportunity, before the anchor came home, still further to show his vocal accomplishments, and presently when "We are homeward bound" was finished, he struck up :—

"Then fare ye well, my bonny fair maid,
We are bound to the Rio Grande."

And followed this with a third :—

"Old Stormy's dead and gone to rest ;
To my ay, ay, ay, Mister Storm Along !
When Stormy died I dug his grave,

A—a-way you Storm Along !

I dug his grave with a silver spade ;
To my ay, ay, ay, Mister Storm Along !
And I lowered him down with a golden chain.

A—a-way you Storm Along !

Into his grave so deep and wide
To my ay, ay, ay, Mister Storm Along !"

These songs have all fine rolling choruses that must be heard to be appreciated, and, though the sense of them is difficult to understand, some glimmering of a meaning can still be found. For example, when furling

a big sail the men on the yard roll up the heavy canvas to a chanty given in quick time, thus :—

“Way, hey, hey, yah : and we'll pay Paddy Doyle for his boots.”

This seems senseless enough, but Paddy Doyle was a famous boarding-house master, and all he ever gave Jack out of an advance note was a pair of sea boots, so that the sailor, in bitter mood, thus mockingly refers to the reward in store for the labours of the voyage.

Here is a song, still sung, that dates from the time when Buonaparte was fresh in English memory :—

“Boney was a warrior,
A-way a yah :
O Boney was a warrior,
John France swore :
Boney went to Mos-cow,
A-way a yah :”

And so on, giving a history of Boney's campaigns till his arrival at St Helena.

Some of the songs tell a story such as that of—

“Pity Reuben Ranzo,
Ranzo, boys, Ranzo,
Oh Ranzo was no sailor,
He shipped on board of a whaler,
And could not do his duty.”

The song goes on to tell of what he endured in consequence of being a “New York tailor” instead of a seaman, and incidentally gives a picture, perfectly true and possible even to-day, of what will befall a landsman who ships as an able seaman.

There is considerable humour in some of the songs, such as :—

“Leave her, Johnny, leave her,
For the food is poor and the wages low,
And it’s time to leave her, Johnny.
A hungry ship and a hungry crew,
Leave her, Johnny, leave her,
A hard captain and chief mate too,
It’s time for us to leave her.”

This is sung when the men are pumping out the ship, their last duty after making fast to the wharf before being paid off, and in the song they take the opportunity of expressing their opinions of the officers in very plain language.

Probably one of the finest of these songs, though in print it does not look well, is “Blow the man down.” After a gale, when the reefs are shaken out, and all hands are hoisting the topsails, the ship still rolling in the heavy sea, making it difficult to stand upon the wet and slippery decks, the men’s oilskins glistening with spray as the long row of them stretch along the deck with the fall of the halliards, one fine fellow bellows out, the roar of his strong voice sometimes lost in the greater thunder of the bellying canvas :—

“Oh blow the man down, bullies, blow the man down,
Give us some time to blow the man down ;
Blow the man down, you darlings lie down,
Blow the man down for fair London town,
Give us some time to blow the man down.”

As the time and tune of the songs are adapted to the particular kind of work, it is impossible to play the music of any of them ; nothing but the clank of windlass

pawls or the rattle of blocks makes fitting accompaniment. Though some of them are silly in their wording and meaningless nowadays, many are more truly and better songs of the sea, with perhaps the single exception of "Tom Bowling," than anything written by Dibdin.

There are other customs of the sea that will survive so long as vessels navigate the waters, and some of these fashions, born of the winds, one can well imagine, will even be adopted in the air ships of the future—if they are in the womb of futurity. For example:—The officer in charge of the ship for the time, whether on man-of-war, or merchantman, on steamer, or sailing vessel, on the bridge of the one or the poop of the other, keeps to the weather side where he can feel the wind and weather upon his cheek, can sniff the land, or sight the coming squall. They rig up "dodgers," or weather-cloths, on steamers' bridges, to keep off the severity of the weather from the officer's lookout—they used to lash a bit of canvas in the weather rigging in the old days, provided it hailed and blew great guns; but now on small provocation a regular "cab," as locomotive drivers would call it, with glass bull's eyes, is erected, but even mail steamer officers and modern battleship lieutenants have not yet, when in charge, taken to walking to leeward.

When the captain or a senior officer comes on deck, the officer of the watch walks to leeward, thus silently resigning the command to his superior. Any seaman who has been to sea a week always goes on the poop or bridge by the lee ladder, and woe betide the youngster who does not quickly get into his head that rule of the ship, that the weather gangways and ladders are for his

superiors. The starboard side, when the wind is right aft or the ship is at anchor, is the post of honour, and the starboard ladder and gangways then become the sacred ground. This is because in a merchant ship the captain is supposed to command the starboard watch, the chief mate the port, though the second mate really commands the watch, the captain being "all night in."

In a man-o'-war "the usage of the sea," as it was at one time aptly called, dates from the earliest times. Up to the present century we compelled foreigners to lower their topsails to our men-o'-war, only doing away with the regulation about 1806. Our own merchantmen were liable to be proceeded against if they "so far forgot their duty as to attempt to pass any of His Majesty's ships without striking their topsails," and though even dipping the ensign is now a mere act of courtesy, Commander Robinson, in *The British Fleet*, relates that about 1894 he saw the skipper of a west country barque let fly his top-gallant halliards to H.M.S. *Royal Sovereign*.

The ceremony of relieving the wheel is exactly what it has been for much longer than a hundred years, and it is of too practical utility, even with the modern gear, to ever disappear. The new helmsman goes by the lee ladder to the quarter-deck or bridge, then steps across to the weather side on to the wheel grating behind the steersman; as he takes the spokes of the wheel the man he is about to relieve states the course, "Sou'-West a half West." "Sou'-West a half West," the new man repeats, and the officer of the watch, who is standing near, thus ascertains that the course is correctly given and repeated. In a sailing ship, close hauled, the words will be "By

the wind," or "Full and by"; the first expression explains itself, the second means to keep the sails full, and the ship as near as possible to her course. In steamers the course is now given in degrees, as "South four degrees East." "Relieve the wheel and look out" is the form of words used by the captain, or whoever is in temporary command, to signify that one watch may go below—welcome order, when in bad weather some of the gear has carried away, and all hands have, perhaps, been on deck for twenty hours at a spell, clearing away wreckage.

There are, moreover, laws unwritten, but the practical common sense of them too apparent for lawyers to have had a hand in their making. The law of not carrying a knife to the wheel, or a sheath knife at all, or a marlinspike aloft without a hitch on the end of its lanyard; of the smallest boys going to the highest points; of landsmen and greenhorns, no matter their age or land-wisdom, rating below the youngest ordinary seaman, or one voyage boy, are sensible examples. A marlinspike falling from aloft point downwards on a man's head would leave the ship short of a hand; a sheath-knife is too handy a weapon for a "Dago" sailor to keep about him, and a knife at the wheel a perplexing thing to the magnetised compass needles. Manning the yards in the navy has become a ceremony of the past, because there are now no yards to man; but, in 1811, a sensible man wrote to the *Naval Chronicle*, pointing out the folly and danger of the practice, though the danger was not, as he said, from the men falling, half so much as from the system of carrying out the order, a system which remained until quite recent

times. At the word of command, "Clear lower deck," the men were expected to run from the lower deck to the mast-heads and "lay" out on the yards without stopping, and this was done on all occasions of going aloft. The violent exertion without a breather often injured the men, for it was a common practice to punish the last man aloft. This was humanely altered, so that the duty was divided into three parts, "clear lower deck," "tops," "mast-heads."

The boatswain's whistle, still used, though almost supplanted by the bugle on men-o'-war, was worn by distinguished sea officers in the reign of Henry VIII., and it seems a pity that it should be thought of too little importance to be retained as a mark of distinction now that boatswains and their mates have fallen off in importance. But their falling away is nothing to that of the lowering of the ship's cook's dignity, who, early in the century, was an official of great importance, if only for this custom, reported in 1815 :—

"According to an established custom in the navy, when a ship is paid off no officer must quit the port or consider himself discharged until the pennant is struck, which can only be done by the cook, as the last officer, at sunset, and should he be absent, no other person can perform the office however desirous the officers may be of taking their departure, and although there may not be a single seaman or marine on board. A curious instance of this took place on the *Caledonia's* being paid off. When the time arrived for hauling down the pennant no cook could be found, from which cause the officers were under the necessity of waiting a day or two until he made his appearance"

The cruelty of punishments in the navy is a stock subject. I have heard less of the brutality of merchant service officers, though it was, and still occasionally is, quite as bad as anything that could be quoted, except the worst flogging cases. Hanging men by the thumbs in the rigging, beating them with iron belaying pins, knocking them senseless with knuckle-dusters, are incidents not absolutely confined to, although more common on American merchant ships, where if they are handy with their weapons, they do not half starve their men as we do ours. Flogging in the navy has been so often described that I shall only quote an authentic instance or two to show that the novelists have not exaggerated. Though Marryat in the *Dog Fiend*, it will be remembered, gives us pictures of keel-hauling, I do not think that there is a single authenticated instance of keel-hauling in the history of the navy, but the gallant author of the best sea novels ever written was often, historically, absurdly inaccurate. It is just possible, though, that a Vanderslyperken, in a revenue cutter of William III.'s time, *did* keel-haul a "Smallbones," for Sir William Monson, the famous Elizabethan admiral, wrote his *Naval Tracts* in 1640, and he suggests the punishment, but at the same time, just as Marryat did with good effect two hundred years later, he wrote that punishment should never be given in hot blood—the captain should always take a night's rest before passing sentence. Here is what Monson says:—

"The seaman is willing to give or receive punishment deservedly, according to the laws of the sea, and not otherwise, according to the fury or passion of a boisterous, blasphemous, swearing commander. Punish-

ment is fittest to be executed in cold blood the next day after the offence is committed and discovered. A captain may punish according to the offence committed, viz., putting men in the bilboes during pleasure; keep them fasting; duck them at the yardarm, or haul them from yardarm to yardarın, under the ship's keel; or make them fast to the capstan and whip them there; or at the capstan or mainmast hang weights about their necks; or gag or scrape their tongues for blasphemy or swearing. This will tame the most rude and savage people in the world."

Of course some of this sounds savage, but it was not worse than flogging round the fleet. And the difference in the treatment of officers and men in the decisions of court-martials was atrociously unfair. For instance, at a court-martial held at Portsmouth in 1804, a purser, for embezzling two firkins of butter, was sentenced to forfeit double the value of the goods he had stolen. At the same time and place the same court sentenced a seaman, for disobedience of orders, to 300 lashes. But officers were not always so leniently treated. For example:—

In the summer of 1810 a midshipman of the *Edgar*, then cruising in the Belt, having been disgraced for some offence, was sent to row guard during the night, and in an endeavour to recover favour with his captain, he landed on the island of Sayer. Here he fell in with a party of Danish soldiers, whom he attacked with the utmost gallantry, and defeated, but one of the boat's crew was killed. Finding no vessels or boats to carry off, he re-embarked, bringing away with him some fowls and two sheep. This was his reward: Immediately on coming on board, he was put both legs in irons, and after

remaining thus for a fortnight, was tried by court-martial, and received the following sentence, which was carried out in every detail:—"And the court do hereby sentence you to be stripped of your uniform publicly on the quarter-deck, mulcted of all your pay, rendered incapable of ever serving His Majesty as an officer, and finally, on the arrival of your ship in England, you are to be drummed ashore." He was a mere boy, had behaved with the greatest gallantry on several occasions during his short career in the service, and his offence was leaving his boat without orders, beating a detachment of the enemy's soldiers, and carrying off some of the enemy's live-stock!

In 1802 Sir Edward Hamilton was tried by court-martial for cruelty to the gunner of his ship. The court dismissed the gallant captain from the service—public opinion was too strong for it to do otherwise—but after the excitement had died out, the officer was reinstated. At the trial the first lieutenant stated that Sir Edward Hamilton, on going out of the ship in the forenoon, gave orders to the gunner to have the guns cleaned; that when Sir Edward returned he declared his commands had not been complied with; d—d the gunner for an old rascal, and instantly ordered him and his whole crew to be seized up in the shrouds. The lieutenant said that the guns appeared to him to have been remarkably well cleaned. The gunner, an elderly man with a family, remained seized up about an hour and a half; then, in consequence of the surgeon's representation, he was taken down and brought aft, where he fainted, having previously requested Sir Edward to try him by a court-martial. This circumstance

happened during frosty weather. The gunner's crew remained lashed in the rigging for about four hours.

A court-martial could flog a man round the fleet, or sentence him to death, and a captain could punish at his own discretion, subject to the usage of the service, about as wide a limitation as it is possible to imagine, and this state of affairs remained until nearly the middle of the century. On January 9, 1844, at Hong-Kong, for example, two men for desertion were each sentenced to receive 100 lashes, and to be flogged round the fleet. In flogging at the gangway, a grating was rigged, and the man spread-eagled to it, as is often described in books, and the boatswain's mate laid on the cat, the punishment seldom exceeding two or three dozen. In flogging round the fleet, the culprit was lashed to a grating rigged in one of the ship's boats, and was rowed from ship to ship in the squadron; alongside of each ship he was given so many lashes out of the whole number to which he had been sentenced. I have, within the last few years, witnessed prisoners flogged in gaols, and have seen the back of a strong man after 25 lashes, scientifically given, look as if a broad purple sash had been crossed upon it; this was raw flesh. The man was a garotter, and the pity is that prisoners of this kind are not oftener sentenced to such punishment. If 25 lashes with a modern gaol cat can flog a man's back raw, 500 with the old service instrument of torture, it can be understood, often killed the victim. I could quote many cases of men flogged to death in the first decade of this century. At a flogging inflicted at Port Mahon in the Island of Minorca in 1811, when a sailor was flogged round the ships of the Mediterranean fleet

under the command of Admiral Sir C. Cotton, an old monk said to a naval officer :—

“ You boast of humanity : what is there in all the tortures that your nation falsely imputes to the Inquisition more protracted or inhuman than this proceeding ? Why do you suspend the lashes but to increase the agony ? The culprit has already fainted twice, yet your surgeon authorises a continuance of the whipping. Is not the poor wretch’s back entirely flayed from his neck to the loins ? Yet the scourging still goes on, and will frequently be suspended and renewed again before the sentence is fulfilled. What worse torture than this could disgrace the prisoners of the Inquisition, or even the dungeons of Algiers ? ”

So that the credit of the navy for severe punishments early in the century is not affected very much if keel-hauling cannot be proved against it.

The case of Jeffrey the sailor is a singular example of the trend of public sentiment in matters of this kind. The history of this case, as told in the House of Commons Reports and the public newspapers, shows that Jeffrey was pressed in the harbour of Falmouth in 1807, from the Plymouth privateer schooner, *Lord Nelson*, by the brig of war, *Recruit*, commanded by Captain the Hon. Warwick Lake. The *Recruit* sailed for the West Indies, and Jeffrey, in the course of the passage, stole some drink from the gunner’s cabin. Captain Lake, some days after the theft was committed, being off the desert island of Sombrero in the West Indies, lowered a boat and marooned Jeffrey upon the island, leaving him nothing but what he stood upright in. News of the affair reached England, and it created a sensation, and was the subject of several parliamen-

tary debates. The captain was tried by court-martial and dismissed the service, but the trial did not take place until February 1810, the fate of Jeffrey remaining all this time uncertain. Government ordered a strict search to be made for Jeffrey, but nothing was heard of him until the middle of 1810, when news came from America that he had been rescued and landed in Boston. He had been on the island, which is a barren rock in the Leeward group, for nine days, and had subsisted on shell-fish and on rain-water found in the hollows of the rock. In due course he returned to England to his native village, Polperro, where he was met by his relatives and the relatives of Captain Lake, who compensated him for his misfortunes with a sum of £600, and all might have ended happily, but Jeffrey preferred to exhibit himself at the small theatres in London, soon lost his money, and before long died a pauper.

Many men have been flogged to death in the service, and the voice of public opinion was never heard in protest, but the case of Jeffrey set all England by the ears, and is often quoted to-day as an example of the most awful cruelty ever perpetrated. The captain's defence was that he thought the island was inhabited, a statement in some measure confirmed by that of one or two officers in the House of Commons, who said that the place was frequented by American schooners after turtle; an American schooner *did* find Jeffrey. If the captain really believed what he said, it does not seem that his punishment was very much worse than that other, perfectly legal, form of torture upon which the old monk at Minorca expressed his sentiments.

The old yarn that persons born at sea all belong to

the parish of Stepney is still believed by sailors. One old sailor proudly introduced another old salt to me only a few weeks ago, and announced that his friend was born in the Pacific and was a native of Stepney! "How do you make that out?" I asked. "Well, you see, 'tis like this; my friend 'ere was born at sea, and every sailor born at sea belongs to the parish of Stepney"; and so on, the old yarn that I have heard a hundred times; so old that I can give chapter and verse for it nearly a hundred years back. It has been often explained as arising from the duty of masters of vessels of entering in their logs all births at sea, and reporting those births to the registrar at the first port of arrival, but why *always* Stepney? And how is it that a learned English judge had no explanation of it in 1813? In the Court of King's Bench in February 1813, "a rule to show cause" was moved for against a magistrate of Cheshire for sending a pauper who had been born at sea to the parish of Stepney.

It appeared from the affidavits that a pauper having been found in Stockport, was examined by the magistrate, who asked him where he was born.

"At sea, your worship."

"Oh, very well, if this man was born on the high seas, he belongs to the parish of Stepney."

Counsel had no wish to press the matter, but the overseers of the parish of Stepney were getting tired of this sort of thing. No fewer than twenty-five paupers during the past year had been thrust upon them in this fashion.

Lord Ellenborough presumed that all these people had not come from Cheshire, and counsel replied no, that it was a common idea among magistrates in all

parts of England. Lord Ellenborough and Mr Justice le Blanc said it was very curious, and it was difficult to understand how the erroneous idea had got abroad.

The language of the sea is of course altering to fit propellers, funnel-stays, steam-winches and all the rest of the up-to-date gear, but much of it still remains the same, and the sailor of a hundred years ago would not be so lost in the company of the modern men of his craft as some people imagine. The language of the sea, if coarse, is always expressive ; users of foul language ashore swear, nearly always, meaninglessly. I wish I could print some of Jack's sayings in proof of his wit. Here, for example, softened to suit shore folk, is an expression of contempt for a man who is not pulling his share on a rope, "Pull you — etc., soldier ; Pull—you couldn't pull fleas off a wet tarpaulin !" The contempt of Jack for the foreigner, who by this time has all but driven him out of the merchant service, is summed up in the way he addresses his deadliest enemy, "Why, you miserable-black-and-white-spotted Ethiopian, you're no better than a —, etc., Rooshian Finn !"

On a wet night, when Jack turns out in his watch below he growls with sarcasm, "Who'd sell a farm and go to sea ?" and though the sailor is heedless of spray, and cares little for even a green sea that wets him from head to foot, woe betide the ship's boy who has carelessly capsized water on some place where an able seaman wants to sit down, for as he says, to be wet *thus* is to be wet all over. There is a delicate humour, too, in the sailor's remark when a shipmate suggests that he should go into some particularly dangerous part of the ship, "Ah, I see you want my clothes."

The proverbial philosophy of the forecastle is better than that of Martin Tupper. Where can be found a neater definition of a nearly drunken man than "two sheets in the wind and the other shivering"? And what a comical picture of slowness and indecision is conveyed by the remark that "the fellow is backing and filling like a billy goat in stays." I hope that the position of a ship in stays, undecided which way to point her head, and the attitude of a goat, doubtful where to plant his horns, are familiar enough to the reader for him to comprehend the true inwardness of the above. "As black as the Earl of Hell's riding-boots" is expressive if not elegant, but "As cold as the top hank of a Greenlander's jib" is poetic. "Soldiers' pulls" are short, useless pulls on a rope, such as are given by a "bunt reefer and a yardarm furler"—a description of a sailor who is the reverse of smart, for the smart men are at the yardarms when reefing, and the duffers at the bunt of the sail, the positions being reversed in furling.

Jack classes the whole human race thus:—Dutchmen, Dagos, Niggers, and Whitemen." I despair of making any but a sailor understand: "Like Paddy's foresail, both tacks over the foreyard," or "Jammed in a clinch like Barney's bull," or the meaning of, "To ride him down like a Yankee's main tack"; but most people will comprehend what a badly-made garment is that which fits "like a purser's shirt on a handspike, all over and touching nowhere"; and what poor pudding is, "Railway duff—a plum at every station." A saying in the bitterly reflective and self-conscious mood by the occupants of a dirty forecastle is: "Hogs, dogs, and sailors"; and a fellow

in longshore clothes is said to be dressed in "a square mainsail coat and a long hat with a rake aft." Certain small coasters are sometimes accused of obtaining stores by pretending to be in distress, and there is a story of a Welshman used to typify these cadgers, who signalled:—"Two days, come to-morrow, from Carnarvon, short of water and provisions." There is also a good story of an Irish mate who, with too much rum in him, undertook to heave the log. In mistake he handed a young countryman of his the hour instead of the minute glass to hold.

"Is it out yet, Mickey?"

"No, sur, nor the devil an out."

"Then haul in the line, by jabers, she is goin' ninety-nine."

A coasting sailor is spoken of as one whose deck promenade only affords him space for "two turns round the galley and one round the long boat with a pull at the scuttle butt."

Jack's contempt for a soldier is well known. Here is one way he has of expressing it: "A messmate before a shipmate, a shipmate before a dog, but a dog before a soldier."

"You call that water fresh!" said the mate of a merchantman to a boy who brought him a bucket of brackish water. "That fresh! why it is as salt as Lot's wife," thus, as I heard a passenger remark who was standing by, combining religious with nautical instruction for the benefit of apprentices.

In the sea language there are many words brought in by the Dutch. "Schut him aft," grunts the sailor as he hauls aft a sheet, an expression evolved thus: Order from the quarter-deck, "Haul aft the mainsheet";

as repeated by a Dutch seaman, "De man schut haul him aft"; then "schut him aft" grew into a regular expression. Merchant seamen, as they pull on ropes when no chanty is being sung, make strange discordant cries to mark the time. And it is out of these rude, but, to the seaman, perfectly intelligible expressions that the idiotic music hall "Yo heave ho" choruses have been coined. "Ugh! tauten her leach! Show her foot," grunts the sailor, as the men swing on a rope, tight as a fiddle string. The meaning is plain; tighten the halliards till the leaches or sides of the sail stretch again with the strain, and the foot of the sail, hauled down tightly at its clues or corners, makes that pretty arch or "roach" in the canvas that goes for so much in the beauty of a ship under sail.

"Aye, aye, sir," is still the seaman-like way of answering an officer, and on board of a man-o'-war the other day I heard the lieutenant in command of the watch give orders to "belay the steam cutter" and to "carry on the whaler," meaning he had finished with the steamer, but he wanted the rowing-boat, called a whaler, still kept handy. "Well the main yard," "Well all," and similar uses of the word "well" are not so frequently heard now in the trimming of sails, but the word is not dead. "Watch there, watch!" when the deep-sea lead is dropped from the bows and the row of men from forward to aft take up the cry, as they drop the coils of line to warn the officer aft to stand by to plumb the lead, will soon no longer be heard anywhere, for Lord Kelvin's patent sounding-machine dropped over a steamer's stern, and getting soundings from a vessel steaming full speed through the water, has superseded the old deep-sea lead; and,

anyhow, men seldom take soundings now, trusting to their superior wisdom, and sometimes attempting to steam overland in consequence.

"Grog ho!" after all hands have been called in a merchant ship is only to be found in a few, though the "she-oak net" is still an institution in the Australian colonies where sailors are supposed to come on board drunk more often than elsewhere, and so need a net to catch them when they tumble off the gangway. Three or four years ago a captain in Port Melbourne was fined for not hanging his she-oak net under the gangways, that being a port regulation. "She-oak" is the slang for a horrible concoction, miscalled beer, sold in Victoria. But there is less drunkenness among seamen nowadays. Modern Board of Trade Regulations have almost done away with the evils of the advance note and boarding-house keepers, runners, and the rascals who used to "shanghai" sailors have almost disappeared, for the modern English merchantman is mostly to be found on steamers—married men, steady fellows who very often have served an apprenticeship to the sea in their youth, but for some reason have not passed the "Board" as officers.

In my time, the story of a certain boarding-master celebrated in Liverpool, was still possible. The qualifications for an A.B. are, shortly, that he should be able to "hand, reef, and steer!" Paddy the something—I forget his full name—was in the habit of finding waifs in the street, and shipping them on outward bounders for a commission and the advance note. He prepared his men thus: He had a room in which they were taught the art of reefing and

furling a sail by means of a blanket rigged across two sticks; they were taught to steer with a cart-wheel, and their education was completed by making them walk three times round a table on which was placed a ram's horn. Paddy would go before the shipping-master then and swear with a clear conscience that here was a man who had learnt to hand and reef, had taken his trick at the wheel, and been three times round the Horn!

Nowadays, a sailor if he wants employment in a sailing ship, can get along without a boarding-master, provided that he can prove that he is not an Englishman, and that he is handy in the use of a rust-chipping hammer; if he wants a berth on a crack mail steamer, higher qualifications are looked for. He must be able to make rope quoits for the passengers' amusement, be ready with some musical instrument for concert purposes, have a knowledge of the management of deck-chairs; and if to these accomplishments he can add that of being able to slack away a boat's fall without letting her into the water too suddenly, why so much the better for the passengers, if an accident should happen.

Of course, this is all very right and proper, for the old-fashioned merchant seaman was scarcely the kind of person to make passengers at home by his courtesy. Here is an example: I was shipmates with an old boatswain, so old that I should not be believed if I stated in print what was his age. A weak-kneed young man, having a cast in his eye, and only one arm, was among the passengers. He was an assistant schoolmaster from an inland town, and was on his way to New Zealand "to rough it in the colonies,"

as he was fond of saying. From the time the ship cast off the tug, this poor creature was sick, and remained so, until he had been a couple of months at sea. Then he began to crawl about the deck, tumbling over everything and everybody. There is no one your sailor hates more than the man who "clutches." This fellow at every roll of the ship clutched anybody handy from the captain to the cabin-boy, and of course the person clutched rolled with him to leeward in the scuppers. This kind of creature never gets his sea-legs, and is for ever an object of contempt to sailors. The weather was clearing up after a blow, and the passenger was sprawling about the deck, rather proud of the improvement in his condition. Presently he caught sight of the old weather-beaten boatswain watching him with a curious look.

"Ah, I see you're looking at me, boatswain; don't you think I've improved? I am getting to be quite a seaman."

"Um! I calls yer a reg'lar — Nelson!"

"Hee-hee-hee! and why a Nelson, boatswain?"

"Why! why! 'cause he had one arm, one eye, same as you, and you're a dashed sight deader nor he is, long as 'tis ago since he became a halbatross."

Which reminds me of a superstition that when old sailors die, their spirits, it was once believed, took on the likeness of an albatross; and from my own knowledge, I think this is the one old superstition that survived until quite lately. I have met old sailors who had a perfect horror of catching an albatross, though they had never heard of the "Ancient Mariner." Cross-examined on the point, they admitted, half laughing at

their own folly, that there might be something in the old yarn, and the beautiful bird might, for all we humans knew, contain the soul of some old salt.

When I have seen sailors, the ship hove to in a gale, sleeping out a whole watch on deck, lying in the lee scuppers with a lump of wood for a pillow, protected, 'tis true, by their oilskins, but with the water actually washing over them, and rain pouring down on their faces, I have thought that their earthly pilgrimage was a fitting preparation for the albatross stage of their existence. If this is really what becomes of the old-time sailor, it may be depended upon that the soul of the modern quarter-master, who spends two hours of his watch in a comfortable wheel-house at a steam-steering wheel, and the other two hours adjusting deck chairs, will in a future state enter the body of a "dicky bird," and be quartered in a canary cage in a lady's boudoir.

CHAPTER IX

THE WRECK LIST OF THE CENTURY

Naval Disasters—Fires at Sea—Emigrant Ships—Panic—Modern Wrecks.

A STUDY of the list of wrecks for the last hundred years ought to re-assure the nervous. The perils of the sea are the same, and the men who encounter them as human as ever; steam has not altered these two factors for better or for worse, stress of weather, accident, and careless shipmasters are still the chief causes of disaster, but these causes are less frequent now than they ever were, and would be still less if carelessness were more adequately punished.

In the first twenty years of the century, a greater number of lives were lost by shipwreck in the Royal Navy than have been lost in men-o'-war during the whole reign of Queen Victoria. In the first fifty years of the century very many masters of merchant vessels, whatever high qualities of seamanship they possessed, were astoundingly ignorant of navigation, and drunkenness in this class of men was looked upon as an amiable weakness inseparable from the profession. Committees of inquiry into the causes of wrecks were appointed by the House of Commons in 1834 and

again in 1843. In 1836 the first committee reported upon the general question of causes of shipwreck, and came to the following conclusion :—(1) Defective construction of ships; (2) inadequate equipment; (3) imperfect state of repair; (4) improper or excessive loading; (5) inappropriateness of form; (6) incompetency of masters and officers; (7) drunkenness of officers and men; (8) operation of marine insurance; (9) want of harbours of refuge; (10) imperfection of charts.

The second committee's report was much to the same purpose, and the evidence upon which these reports were based was just as contradictory as it always is when a number of experts are called whose interests bias their statements. Of the causes stated in these reports, I have no hesitation in asserting almost the only preventable one now remaining is that of careless navigation; while the want of proper discipline and training is responsible for loss of life in merchant vessels in nine cases out of ten when accident happens.

But at the end as at the beginning of the century the *accident* remains, sudden disasters will happen, and no human devices will avert them.

Disasters in the present Royal Navy—notwithstanding certain well remembered calamities—are wonderfully rare compared with the wooden period of the service, and some of the horrors of a hundred years ago are to-day almost an impossibility. Take, for example, the case of the *Queen Charlotte*, Howe's flagship, in June 1794, and remembered, not for this fact only, but as being one of the worst disciplined ships in the service. She caught fire in March 1800 through carelessness—a slow match on the lower deck among loose straw—in half-an-hour she was burning fiercely, yet remained afloat for four

hours. Though this happened on a fine morning in sight of Leghorn, and there were plenty of boats about, and the officers behaved with the greatest courage and coolness, the captain and many others going down with the ship, out of 900 persons on board only 120 were saved. It would be practically impossible to parallel this case in a modern steel battleship. From fire there is hardly any danger, and if in a modern war vessel those on board are given fine weather and four hours' grace when disaster comes to them, it is difficult to imagine how a single life could be sacrificed.

What a contrast to this story is that of the *Magicienne* in 1831. A fire was discovered close to the magazine, at night, many miles from land. The ship's corporal, who found it, went quietly and reported the matter to the officer of the watch, who in turn reported it to Captain Plumridge, who, coming on deck in his night-gown, ordered the drummer to beat to quarters, and sent a man aloft to see "what that ship is to leeward."

"I see no ship, sir," sang out the man when he got aloft.

"You do, sir, I can see her," then turning to the man at the wheel the captain added, "and so can you, I am sure," and the helmsman, afraid to say no, agreed.

"Then put your helm up and bear down to her," ordered the skipper; meantime fire hose had been ranged along the decks, the men had fallen in quietly at their stations, and in ten minutes the fire, which had gone within three inches of the powder, was extinguished, many of the people on board not knowing until all was over that the affair was anything more

than a fire drill, while those who had seen the fire and were inclined to be nervous, were quite reassured at the prospect of relief in the imaginary ship to leeward created by the happy idea of the captain.

In the first ten years of the century we lost thousands of seamen by shipwreck. I could run off a long catalogue of our losses, many of them, of course, a consequence of putting to sea in bad weather, and in such circumstances only justified by a state of war, but many of them undoubtedly from want of discipline and the unseaworthiness of ships. The *Brazen* sloop of war went ashore off Newhaven in 1800 and drowned 119 of her crew. The *Invincible*, a seventy-four, next year, drowned 400 when she stranded off Yarmouth. The *Apollo* frigate, in 1804, with the greater part of the West India convoy, about forty sail of merchant vessels, was driven on the coast of Portugal with a loss of life of 200. Six years later the *Nymph* and the *Pallas* were lost in the Firth of Forth, drowning many; the *Minotaur* stranded on the Dutch coast, losing 500 of her crew, and the *Satellite* foundered at sea with all hands. The years 1810-11 were the most disastrous of the century to the navy. In November and December of the first year, violent storms prevailed in the Atlantic, and the wreck list, leaving out all merchant vessels and minor casualties, runs thus:—The *Saldanha*, frigate, went ashore on the Irish coast, 200 drowned; the *Hero* and the *Grasshopper* were driven on to the Haak Sand in the Texel; the *St George* and the *Defiance* on to the Jutland coast, and a convoy of 100 ships bound from Sweden to England went with the first two, the whole loss of life amounting to about 4000.

I suppose in a chapter on wrecks, one *must* re-tell old stories; though I should hope the narratives of the *Kent*, the *Birkenhead*, and the *Sarah Sands* disasters are in every barrack library, one cannot write the sea story of the century without some mention of them. A wooden sailing-ship on fire in a gale of wind with 640 people on board, more than 100 of them women and children, and 569 saved—this is the story of the *Kent's* loss in the Bay of Biscay in 1825. The ship was outward bound to the East Indies with troops, and the perfect discipline of the soldiers in the face of three alternatives of death—by drowning, by burning, or by being blown up when the fire reached the magazine—enabled the little brig *Cambria* to rescue so many. The only available boat, in the face of the heavy sea, and the distance it was necessary for the *Cambria* to keep away from the burning ship, took three-quarters of an hour to make the trip between the two vessels, and while this boat was carrying the women and children from the ship to the rescuing vessel, the soldiers sat about on hatches and waited quietly for the end.

Some miserable idiot in a theatre cries “Fire!” and the whole house becomes a body of lunatics, men trampling women under foot, and tearing each other to pieces to escape from a safe building. In momentary expectation of being blown to pieces by gunpowder, the soldiers of the 31st Regiment, for something like twelve hours on the burning *Kent*, in no instance forgot the teaching of the parade ground.

Again, the *Birkenhead*—ever to be remembered and quoted—a Government paddle steamer bound to the

Cape of Good Hope with reinforcements for the troops at the Caffre War, struck a rock near Simon's Bay on February 26, 1852, and out of 638 people on board only 184 were saved. Of the number drowned 358 were soldiers, 9 of them officers. They were drafts of the 2nd Queens, 6th Royals, 12th Lancers, 12th Foot, 43rd, 45th, the 60th Rifles, 73rd, 74th, and 91st Regiments. Captain Wright, the senior surviving soldier officer, in his official report, said :—

“The order and regularity that prevailed on board from the time the ship struck till she totally disappeared far exceeded anything that I thought could be effected by the best discipline, and it is the more to be wondered at, seeing that most of the soldiers had been but a short time in the service. Every one did as he was directed, and there was not a murmur or a cry among them until the vessel made the final plunge. I could not name any individual officer who did more than another. All received their orders and had them carried out as if the men were embarking, instead of going to the bottom; there was only this difference, that I never saw embarkation with so little noise and confusion. . . . One fact I cannot omit mentioning: when the vessel was just going down, the commander called out, ‘All those that can swim, jump overboard and make for the boats.’ Lieutenant Girardot and myself were standing on the poop, and we begged the men not to do so as the boat with the women would be swamped. Not more than three made the attempt. All the women and children were saved.”

The last scene remembered by the survivors, and by millions, generations later, was that of the soldiers drawn up on the poop, at their head Colonel Seton,

the commanding officer, the ship breaking in halves, the waters closing over her, and the men still quietly waiting for the end—a picture in the minds of men in the beauty of its unselfish heroism unsurpassable on sea or land.

The story of the *Sarah Sands*, an iron steamer that left Portsmouth with 300 of the 54th Regiment, bound for India in November 1857, is a more fortunate instance. Good seamanship on the part of Captain Castles was aided by the magnificent bravery and discipline of the soldiers, and the ship, though so badly on fire that a small magazine aft exploded and blew her port quarter out, was navigated for ten days in this state and made the Mauritius without the loss of a life. We have in the case of the trooper *Warren Hastings* in 1897 a similar instance. Every one was saved, and the commanding officer in his despatch, telling of the wreck, explains what happened in these words :—

“ From my position on the bridge, where I could see distinctly, I was particularly struck by the way in which, when the disembarkation of the men was stopped to allow the ladies, women, and children to get ashore, the former stood quietly on one side to permit them to pass, and then resumed their own disembarkation in perfect order, when all the time it appeared to be a question of moments when the vessel would heel over.”

In the old navy, unseaworthy ships were common ; nowadays they are rare, perhaps unknown. It was natural that while the service was in a transition stage such an unfortunate experiment as that of the *Captain* should be possible, but, with the one exception of the *Megæra*, I can recall no instance where the Admiralty can be seriously blamed for sending unseaworthy ships

to sea. Captain Cowper Coles designed the *Captain*, in the later sixties, when it was an indispensable condition for the naval constructor to build men-o'-war to sail as well as steam, and yet to be what we then called modern ironclads. The ship had two heavy turrets, and only 9 ft. of freeboard, and along the turrets ran a light hurricane deck.

On the night of September 7, 1870, the *Captain* was off Cape Finisterre in company with a squadron ; it was blowing a gale, and, though steam was up, the propeller was not moving, or was revolving at dead slow, but three double-reefed topsails and the fore-topmast stay-sails were set—canvas that, in the circumstances, in a seaworthy ship would have been perfectly safe. At midnight, when the starboard watch was mustering, the ship lurched heavily to leeward, and the captain gave orders to let go the topsail halliards and sheets, but before the men could reach the belaying pins, the ship heeled far enough to starboard for the wind to act upon the under side of the hurricane deck ; the top hamper of turrets did the rest, and in a few moments she turned completely bottom upwards. The gunner and seventeen seamen were all that escaped out of about 490.

There had been no time to launch boats, and many of the survivors actually saved themselves by crawling out of the ship's ports on to her bottom, and getting into a boat that happened to float near them. Captain Burgoyne, who commanded the ship, was seen clinging to another boat that was floating bottom upwards ; the survivors in the launch tried to reach him, but failed to pull the heavy boat against the head sea. One of the men offered to throw his commanding officer an oar.

"For God's sake keep your oars, men, you will need them." These were Burgoyne's last words, and he was not seen again.

The boat made Finisterre at daylight ; at about the same time the remainder of the squadron missed the *Captain* and saw, where she should have been, the evidence of floating wreckage that told of her fate. Though very young at the time, I well remember the sensation at Portsmouth when the news arrived. From one street alone thirty widows stood among the crowd of weeping women outside the dockyard gates, in the vain hope of hearing that another boat had turned up.

The *Captain's* unseaworthiness, as I have said, was an unfortunate error born of the peculiar transition conditions in which the building of warships then was. The wreck of the *Megæra*, an iron steamer, cannot be excused on these grounds. In the spring of 1870 she was sent to Australia with relief crews for the squadron on the station, her total complement making altogether about 330 men. A few days after sailing she was compelled to put back, owing to her leaky state, and was patched up and sent off again. After leaving the Cape of Good Hope, and when a thousand miles from the island of St Paul's, the leak broke out again, and steadily gained, so that the captain, finding that he could not keep her afloat, ran the ship for St Paul's, and on June 19, she was beached in such poor harbour as the almost barren rock affords. The ship's company were landed and remained a month before communication was made with a passing vessel, but two months longer elapsed, owing to weather conditions and the remoteness of the place, before the people could be embarked.

During this time the castaways had fared well

through the forethought of the captain and the perfect discipline of all hands. Everything that could be removed from the ship was saved, and the men were kept well employed in building huts, husbanding water, fishing, and similar occupations. At the time of the wreck, St Paul's was occupied by a few fishermen, whose half-dozen huts formed the only settlement, but the industry of the crew of the *Megæra* converted the place into quite a large canvas and wood township; among other things they constructed a regular water supply, bringing the water from a reservoir on a hill by the aid of machinery from the wreck and 800 ft. of the ship's fire hose.

In an official report on the loss of his ship, Captain Thrupp said:—"The edges of the hole in one of the iron plates through which water leaked into the ship were so thin that they could easily be bent with two fingers. Many of the girders were eaten through at the bottom and others nearly so." Said the captain: "Breaking up as the ship was, the girders separating from the bottom, that bottom leaky in one place and very thin in many more, the pumps continually being choked with pieces of iron, and those thick pieces, I could not with so many lives at stake persist in proceeding on the voyage."

The ship was twenty-two years old when she started, was placed at the bottom of the *Navy List*, and had been reported unseaworthy for any but short trips. At an inquiry the captain was honourably acquitted, and those responsible for sending her to sea severely censured.

In the old navy there was no lack of courage to meet disaster, but in the modern service the behaviour of the men of the *Vanguard*, of the *Victoria*, and in that

happier instance of the *Calliope*, for the perfect discipline and magnificent self-control of all ranks, will be remembered so long as England has a navy. When the *Vanguard* was rammed by the *Iron Duke* in the Irish Channel in September 1875, the *Vanguard*, having a quality of seaworthiness that enabled her to keep afloat a reasonable time, her crew, owing entirely to this fact and their perfect discipline were, every one of them, saved. The ship kept afloat a little more than an hour from the time she was rammed, and rather less than twenty minutes of that period were devoted to saving the 400 persons that made up the ship's complement—the remainder of the time was given to endeavours to save the ship. The court-martial found fault with those responsible for not giving more time to the last operation, and the finding of that court-martial was very likely in Admiral Tryon's thoughts in his last moments on the bridge of the *Victoria*.

The *Victoria* was rammed by the *Camperdown* in June 1893, off Tripoli, and she went down in less than fifteen minutes, yet nearly half (359 out of 650) the ship's company were saved, though most of the short time given to them was spent in trying to save the ship, and the boats of the ships in her company were kept back until the last moment. At the court-martial, it was found "with the deepest sorrow and regret that the collision was due to an order by the late Commander-in-Chief, Vice-Admiral Sir George Tryon, to turn the divisions of the fleet sixteen points inwards, when the columns were only six cables apart." Captain Bourke, when before the court, read a defence that in every line of it showed a chivalrous desire to screen the blunder of his dead superior, and the last few sentences of this

paper best describe how the modern British sailor can die :—

"When the crushing blow delivered by the ram of the *Camperdown* was felt, the impression that passed through every one's mind must have been one of serious apprehension. No one in the ship, knowing what had happened, could have failed to appreciate that the conditions were certainly serious. With this in view, I should like to lay before the court a few remarks on what, I submit, was the discipline and self-control exhibited by all. There was absolutely no panic, no shouting, no rushing aimlessly about. The officers went quietly to their stations. Everything was prepared, and the men were all in their positions for hoisting out the boats or performing any duty they may have been ordered to carry out. The men on the forecastle worked with a will until the water was up to their waists, and it was only when ordered aft that they left their work to fall in on the upper deck with the remainder of the ship's company. In the case of the men working below, I was a witness of their coolness when the order was passed down for every one to go on deck. There was no haste or hurry to desert the flat. I can further testify to the men below in the engine-rooms. In the starboard one and all were in their stations. The engineer officer was there, the artificers and stokers also. I am sure that those in the port engine-room and the boiler-rooms were equally true to themselves, to the country they were serving, and to the trust reposed in them. In all the details of this terrible accident one spot especially stands out, and that is the heroic conduct of those who to the end remained below, stolidly, yet boldly, at their place of duty. All honour to them especially. The men fallen in on the upper deck showed the same spirit. I would recall to you what I described in my evidence. When the men were turned about to face the ship's side, it must have passed through the minds of many that to look out for oneself would be the best thing to do. The men must have seen the others coming wet from forward, which, in itself, might have increased their apprehensions. This order to turn about was given apparently about a minute before the end, and I can hear of not one single instance of any man rushing to the side. It only wanted two or three to start a panic, but I think it should be on record that not one was found

who had not that control over himself which characterises true discipline and order. It has been shown in evidence that no one jumped from the ship until just as she gave the lurch which ended in her capsizing. I imagine there is not a single survivor who can give any clearer reason for his being saved than that he was more fortunate than his neighbours. There is one deeply sad circumstance connected with the accident, and that is the very large proportion of midshipmen who lost their lives. These young officers at the commencement of their career were thus 'cut off,' but it will be to their undying honour that, young as they were, they also showed that spirit of trust and bravery, and one and all remained at their posts on deck till the end. There is, no doubt, that among those lost many individual acts of heroism and disregard of self must have been displayed, but I regret that I am only in a position to state one. This is the case of the Rev. Samuel Norris, Chaplain of the *Victoria*, than whom no one in the ship was more beloved and respected. It is his words, 'Steady, men, steady,' when the end came, which bring before one the appreciation of his coolness and valour, even at the moment of the ship capsizing. We only hear of him, careless of his own safety, exhorting the men to be cool and calm. In his daily life on board, he mixed with the men, and knew all their thoughts, and advised them in their troubles. A noble character like this inculcates by his example the discipline and obedience which were shown on board the *Victoria*. Amongst those saved, equal acts of bravery and coolness were displayed."

A few months ago, I talked with a man who was saved from the *Victoria*, and he, not knowing I had the least idea of printing his words, described what he saw of the last moments of those on the upper bridge of the ship. "She was heeling over at such an angle that the Admiral was compelled to grasp firmly with both hands the bridge railing. Then he caught sight of a midshipman standing beside him and let go one hand to wave the boy away, saying as survivors have reported: 'Don't stop there, youngster, go to a boat.' These were his last words."

The boy to whom he spoke was Herbert Marsden Lanyon of Belfast, seventeen years of age, and only entered on the *Britannia* in 1890. The next moment the ship capsized. The Admiral and the midshipman when last seen were still waiting quietly for the end. What less could a nation expect from Tryon? But what noble inspiration braced this boy to face death thus, and make an ending of, at least, an equal greatness!

Of other naval disasters, that of the *Eurydice* most nearly resembles, in the manner of its happening and its suddenness, that of the *Captain*. Out of her complement of 300 only 2 were saved. She was a sailing frigate, used as a training ship for ordinary seamen and boys, and she capsized off the Isle of Wight in a sudden squall in 1878. Before sail could be reduced, the ship fell on her beam ends, then filled and went down. That a ship of her class should be lost in such circumstances is wholly irreconcilable with any principles of seamanship. The captain was a man of large experience in sailing ships, but the *Eurydice*'s lower deck ports were open, and when she lay over the water poured in, and completed the mischief. It is alleged that she was known to be crank, yet was carrying every stitch of canvas, and the state of the weather certainly did not justify doing this with the lower deck ports open.

The *Atlanta*, a similar class of vessel employed in the same service, left Bermuda in 1880 with 280 people on board, and she was never afterwards heard of; it is surmised that she went down in one of the heavy gales prevailing in the Atlantic at that period, in which many merchantmen were lost.

The escape of the *Calliope* from the hurricane in 1889 at Samoa has been often described; all that I shall

write of it here was related to me on the deck of the ship when she came into Sydney harbour to repair damages.

When ship after ship had gone ashore, and it was plain the *Calliope's* anchors could not be expected to hold much longer, there came a moment when Captain Kane had to decide upon one of two courses of action. Such a moment as this is the test of all others of the fitness of a man to command. It was necessary to act without faltering, immediately. The life teaching of a naval commander is directed towards preparing him for such a crisis, and Captain Kane did honour to his training. To risk the lives of all, slip the cables and head straight out, taking the chances of the machinery breaking down, the engine-room being swamped, a lack of power in the engines to drive the ship through the sea, the rudder breaking and the ship becoming unmanageable; or to beach her in a sandy place where the ship would probably be wrecked, but the lives of the crew saved—these were the alternatives.

Captain Kane decided. The cables were slipped, the engines were put full speed ahead, every pound of steam and every revolution of the screw that the best of engineers and stokers could bring to the aid of the ship were there, and the fight began.

The American flagship, the *Trenton*, had at this time so dragged that she lay right in the channel, leaving insufficient room for the *Calliope* to clear her. It was necessary to pass to leeward of the American. The movement needed delicate skill and the steadiest nerve to direct the steering. To collide with the *Trenton* would be as fatal as to touch the reef.

Slowly the engines of the *Calliope* forced her ahead.

She plunged and rolled, and the seas broke over her decks, washing away the boats and all that was moveable, every instant threatening to flood the engine room. Then at last came the moment when she was abreast of the *Trenton*. For an instant the vessels were so close together that it seemed as if their yards would interlock. Just in time, the *Calliope* rolled outward from the *Trenton*, and when she recovered and rolled the other way the danger was over. The shave was so close that the *Calliope* as she forged ahead carried away some of the *Trenton's* gear, leaving part of her figure-head in the *Trenton's* cabin.

Upon the vessel's bridge beside his commander stood Navigating-lieutenant Henry Pearson, and the tremendous responsibility of this time was upon the lieutenant's shoulders as well as upon those of the captain. Apia harbour is difficult to navigate at all times—a vessel's course has to be steered by certain marks upon the land, which are none too easily distinguishable in the best of weather, but, with all the added difficulties of the storm at this supreme moment there was the danger of collision. The writer was told by an eye-witness that Captain Kane, as the *Calliope* drove towards the *Trenton*, turned to his lieutenant and said—

"Well, Mr Pearson, what do you think of it? Shall we clear her?"

"We must—or go over her," answered the other.

And the *Calliope* did clear the American. As she passed out to sea leaving the *Trenton* driving helplessly towards the reef to share the fate of the other vessels, Admiral Kimberley of the *Trenton*, who was on the bridge of his ship, waved his cap. Then the American

sailors, seeing the Britishers forging their way from danger to safety, forgot their own peril, and manned the rigging and gave three hearty cheers.

Then the outer reef was cleared, leaving less than sixty yards of sea room to spare. Outside it blew harder even than it was blowing in the harbour; but outside there was sea-room, and the *Calliope*, now safe, stood off the coast until the weather moderated.

Upon the good seamanship and steady nerves of those on deck the issue of that day depended; but below, in the engine-room and stokehold, courage, skill, and faithful service in no less degree were needed. From the gold-laced chief engineer upon whom the responsibility rested, to the youngest grimy coal trimmer whose sole duty it was silently to shovel coal even though his last moment had come to him while doing it, all did their allotted tasks in a manner well worthy of the brave man who commanded them. Every one belonging to this department was on duty, and there remained for sixteen hours. The pitching and rolling of the ship were so bad that, in firing the boilers, the men nearest the furnace doors were in no small danger of being pitched headlong into the furnace, and so a man held a ringbolt with one hand, and with the other grasped a comrade's waistbelt, while he threw coal upon the fires.

The engineer in charge told me that the power developed by the machinery was equal to, if not greater than, would propel the ship at 15 knots an hour in smooth water, and yet in the hurricane the *Calliope* at no time made more than steerage way. In the stokehold not a sound was heard but the ring of the fire shovels, and in the long hours of

suspense and danger no man murmured, nor by any man below was a question asked as to the progress of the ship, or the chances of life and death.

There are plenty of naval disasters from which I might go on selecting instances of individual courage as well as collective coolness, and make a book of the subject. The *Orpheus*, a new screw steam corvette, commissioned for service as flagship of Commodore Burnett of the Australian squadron, went ashore on the bar, at the entrance of Manukau harbour, New Zealand, and out of her complement of 280, the commodore, 22 officers, and 167 men were lost. The cause of the disaster was a shifting shoal that the local pilots did not seem to have taken account of. The great loss of life was caused by the heavy sea running on the bar, breaking right over the ship, and the absence, for many hours, of any efficient life-saving appliances. With the *Orpheus* went down many valuable early records of the Australian naval station. In 1847, the *Avenger* was lost off Galita ; out of 250 only 4 were saved, and among the drowned, Lieutenant Marryat, son of the novelist, died bravely endeavouring to launch a boat. In the latter half of the century, besides the ships I have mentioned, there have, of course, been numerous wrecks of men-o'-war. The *Wasp* went ashore in a gale on Tory Island, off the north-west coast of Ireland in 1884, and 52 lives were lost ; and the *Serpent* met with a similar disaster in 1890, off the coast of Corunna, drowning 173 persons. With the exception of the instances I have quoted, the loss of life in the last fifty years has, however, been very small, and in every single instance all hands have behaved perfectly.

We have been fortunate, considering all things, in

our immunity from accidents with steam and gun powder on modern war vessels. Quite as many men have been killed by accidents with the old thirty-two pounders as have been injured by the modern weapons. The *Thunderer* has been the unluckiest ship in the service in this respect. In 1876, one of her boilers burst, killing 45 men and injuring 50 others, and four years later one of her big guns exploded, killing 2 officers and 8 men, and injuring about 35 others. Coal gas was the cause assigned for the blowing up of the *Dotterel* in the Straits of Magellan in 1881, by which about 145 of the ship's company were drowned. On the *Cordelia* in 1891, while on the Australian station, a gun burst, killing 2 officers and 4 men. On the torpedo-destroyer *Bullfinch*, in July 1899, 10 men were killed by an accident to the machinery, when she was on her trial trip.

Men have done their duty nobly in the merchant service as well as in the Royal Navy. The British merchant skipper has almost invariably been the last to leave his ship. With none of the pride of rank and commission to inspire him in the hour of peril, he has gone down with his passengers, when the resources of his courage and skill, unaided by little else, alas! have availed nothing; when the boats have been washed away, or smashed in unskilful launching, or rushed by panic-stricken mobs, he has stood on the bridge of the liner, or hung on to the weather rigging of the clipper, dying at his post with dignity and calm courage.

The number of American and Australian emigrant ships burnt at sea, run ashore, or foundered, between the forties and the seventies, and the terrible loss of life involved, when one looks down the wreck list, makes it easy to understand why a generation ago, people were

so much more chary of undertaking a sea voyage than they are now. In the years when emigration was in full swing, one loss succeeded another so rapidly that the "nine days' wonder" created by the disaster was quite fresh in the memory of the public when the next occurred. It would be tedious to describe them—they are nearly all alike. If the catastrophe was sudden, a panic set in, boats were smashed or washed away in the lowering of them, and those who were saved owed nothing for their deliverance to any such readiness for emergencies as people have a right to expect from public carriers. Fires at sea occurred with great frequency, and when they did take place the proportion of persons lost was shocking. In the case of the steamer *Austria*, for example, bound from Hamburg to New York, which caught fire in 1858 by the extraordinary incapacity of those responsible, 67 out of 530 on board were all that were saved.

Early in the century, the crews of some of the wrecked merchantmen often thought more of breaking into the spirit-room than rescuing the passengers, and what else could be expected from the class of men then available? When the *Earl of Abergavenny*, East Indiaman, went down off Portland, in 1805, taking with her 250 people, among them her captain, Wordsworth, brother of the poet, and seemingly of similar temperament to the verse maker, one of the last scenes remembered is that of riotous sailors endeavouring to break into the spirit-room, and the chief officer standing there with a brace of pistols sternly ordering them to die like men, and not like drunken cowards; but many of the crew, notwithstanding, died drunk.

The burning of the *Amazon* in the Bay of Biscay in

January 1852, taught a lesson in the danger of wooden steamships. When she was launched, in 1851, on the Thames, she was the largest wooden merchant steamer in the world, and the fact that she was 300 ft. long and had paddle-wheel engines of 800 horse power, created a sensation. She left England with the West Indian mails on January 2, having on board 50 passengers and 110 crew. Three days later a store locker in the engine-room, filled with such inflammables as oil, tallow, and cotton waste, caught fire, and in the gale that was blowing the ship was soon ablaze, and, worse than all, the engines were going full speed, and no one could enter the burning engine-room to stop them. In such circumstances it was impossible safely to launch boats, of which there were plenty, though so stowed that they were difficult to get at, and fitted with a patent lowering apparatus that no one seems to have understood, or any one ever thought about, until the disaster happened. Notwithstanding the speed of the ship, attempts were made to lower the boats, but in the wild scramble most of them were capsized. Ultimately, about sixty persons escaped in three boats, the ship blowing up a few hours later. These survivors were picked up by passing vessels, after suffering many hours of exposure and hardship.

The owners of the *Amazon*, the Royal West India Mail Company, were very unfortunate in the beginning of their history. The Company was established in 1841, and the records of its losses in ten years runs thus:—

The *Medina*, wrecked on 12th May 1844, on a coral reef, near Turk's Island; the *Isis*, on the 8th October 1842, sunk off Bermuda, having previously

struck on a reef; the *Solway*, wrecked off Corunna, on the 8th April 1843; the *Tweed*, on 12th February 1847, on the Alacranes rocks, Gulf of Mexico; the *Forth*, likewise on the same rocks, on 15th January 1849; the *Actæon*, lost in 1844 on the Negrellos, near Cartagena; the steamer *Demerara*, stranded in the river Avon, near Bristol, in 1850. The wrecks of the *Tweed* and *Solway* were attended with peculiarly distressing circumstances, involving the loss of nearly 120 lives, and, in the case of the survivors of the *Tweed*, accompanied by an extent of hardship and suffering which has rarely found a parallel in the records of disasters at sea. The surviving passengers of the *Tweed*, with little on but their night apparel, remained for a week on a barren rock before they could be rescued, and 72 out of 151 persons lost their lives.

The modern steel passenger ship, lit by electricity, does not catch fire, so that of late years we have had no parallel case with that of the *Amazon*, but the modern, steel, cargo-carrying sailing-ship has been very unfortunate in this way. I have personal knowledge of two typical cases. In the one an iron sailing-ship, loaded fore and aft with jute, was set on fire by the steward carrying a naked light into the storeroom. The captain, as good a sailor as ever stepped a deck, as soon as the alarm was given, lost his head and opened the hatches, with the result that the ship's hold was soon a furnace of blazing jute. Fortunately she was in a river, and was just getting under sail. The captain in the greatest state of excitement gave a dozen contradictory orders, and the next thing that happened, the ship drifted ashore on the soft river bank and there toppled on her beam ends. Her safe

position enabled the men to pay attention to the fire and obtain help from the shore, and in the course of some hours the fire was put out. This skipper was exactly the man one would have expected to behave well in a critical moment at sea, yet the fire seemed to throw him entirely off his balance, and this condition, it is more than likely, prevailed in many of the disasters to emigrant ships.

A second case shows an entirely different kind of shipmaster. A few years ago a steel sailing-ship left Newcastle, New South Wales, for San Francisco with the usual cargo of coals. In this particular trade there have been an extraordinary number of cases of coal taking fire, and no satisfactory explanation of the cause has been found, although considerable inquiry has been made in the matter. About two-thirds of the voyage was completed when this particular ship's cargo was found to be burning. The captain battened down the hatches and smothered every place where there was the least possibility of air reaching the fire, then he got his boats all ready for lowering, stocking them with food, water, compasses, and such things; for at any moment the gases confined in the ship's hold might blow up the deck, as he knew very well. Then, having appointed men to their stations in the boats, he employed the watch in pumping water down the hold to keep the ship as cool as possible, and in pumping it out again as soon as the weight of it began to tell. For many days the ship was kept steadily on her course in this state, the iron deck sometimes getting so hot that the men could not stand upon it, until at last the coast of California was reached, and a tug-boat picked up just in time to tow the ship into the bay. She was

such a furnace, by this time, that the harbour master was compelled to have her sunk on a mud shoal, to extinguish the fire. When the tug first saw the ship with her boats all towing astern, and looking as if something had happened, the tug master thought he had fallen in with a stroke of fortune in the way of salvage. But the captain of the ship was cool enough when the tug hailed him to reply that he was all right ; there was nothing the matter, and that he intended, as there was a fair wind, to sail to the Heads ; and, ultimately, he bargained with the tug to take him at ordinary towing rates.

When emigration to Australia was at its height, an appalling number of lives were lost, generally through panic, or want of skill in the launching of boats. The wreck of the *Northfleet* was awfully sudden, but panic drowned most of her passengers. She was a wooden sailing-ship, and was run into by a steamer in the middle of the night in January 1873, when at anchor off Dungeness before sailing for Tasmania. On board her were about 350 persons, mostly railway navvies, and of this number 293 were drowned. The Spanish steamer *Murillo* was responsible for the disaster ; after cutting the *Northfleet* in two she steamed away, and left the sinking ship to her fate. At a subsequent inquiry the captain of the *Murillo* escaped punishment. He declared that he believed at the time that no damage had been done by the collision. The *Northfleet* went to the bottom within half-an-hour—time enough to have saved most of the people if they had not gone mad with fear, the navvies rushing to the boats, though the captain, revolver in hand, did his best, firing at and wounding one man, in an endeavour to save the

women and children, among them his wife, who escaped and was granted a pension from the Civil List in recognition of her husband's bravery, for Captain Knowles went down at his post, and most of his officers went with him.

The scene on the deck of the *Northfleet* was lamentable, but though men shoved women aside and crowded the boats, they were rough labourers ; many of them, likely enough, had never seen a ship before, and they behaved more like frightened sheep than like men. Though it is a bad page in our sea story, there are worse ones in our modern history. Italian emigrants, when the *Utopia*, in 1891, ran into H.M.S. *Anson* lying off Gibraltar, behaved far worse, and 550 out of 830 of them were drowned through their own fault, for there was no want of assistance ; two British bluejackets were also drowned in trying to rescue the poor frightened creatures, and ten minutes' coolness would have saved hundreds. Again, we cannot parallel the horrors of the *Burgoyne* disaster when, in July 1898, she was run down by the *Cromartyshire* off the Nova Scotian coast, drowning more than 500 persons, only one woman, out of the hundreds on board, being saved. The emigrants, and it is alleged some of the crew, in their rush, drove the passengers away with boat-hooks and oars. Some of them even used their knives to drive women and children away from the boats, and hacked the arms of those who were holding on to the rafts to compel them to loosen their grasp. We have nothing like this recorded under the British ensign, but we should be careful not to cry shame too loudly upon our neighbours. The horrors of a sinking ship on a dark night, a thousand men and women at a moment's

notice confronted with death, and perhaps not a hundred cool heads in the mob, are circumstances conceivable under any flag. The burning of the sailing-ship *Cospatrick*, in 1875, was another terrible disaster. She was taking about 450 emigrants to New Zealand, and caught fire at sea. The flames were fore and aft the ship in less than half-an-hour after they were discovered ; then the usual panic set in, and the people were drowned by scores in attempts to launch the boats. About a dozen persons managed to get into a boat, and after many days of frightful suffering, three poor creatures, the only survivors, were picked up by a passing vessel.

The *Northfleet* was wrecked before fairly starting on her voyage ; the *Royal Charter* went down in sight of the home so many of her passengers had spent the best years of their lives in patient toil and weary waiting to see again. She was a sailing-ship, and out of 500 persons on board, 459 were drowned, among them many returning diggers bringing home their Australian gold. Charles Dickens has told the story in a beautiful tribute to the clergyman of the little Welsh village where the bodies washed up by the sea were buried.

The *London*, iron screw steamer, foundered in the Bay of Biscay in January 1866, outward bound to Melbourne. Her loss is best remembered for the fortitude displayed by the passengers. Two of these men, in life probably as far apart as the poles, died in such fashion, that their names to-day live in the memory, linked together for the likeness of their great ending.

The Rev. D. J. Draper, a Wesleyan missionary,

returning to Melbourne, the scene of thirty years of his mission work, right up to the moment of the ship sinking, with his wife, stood by the passengers in the saloon, praying with them and exhorting them to die quietly. "The captain tells us there is no hope," said Mr Draper, "but I tell you there is hope for all," and by his calm demeanour and fearless readiness to die, giving such comfort in his words that no pulpit utterance of them could convey. On the deck, the while, G. V. Brooke, in his time a popular tragedian, so nobly played his last part that all England still cherishes his memory. For hours he, in his shirt sleeves, worked at the pumps, setting an example to the seamen, until at last the *London*, overwhelmed by the seas, filled and made her final plunge; then the last seen of him, he was leaning quietly on the after-hatch, swinging one of the doors of it idly to and fro, thus waiting for the curtain.

No less bravely died the officers of the ship, working to the end to save her; then, when the only boat successfully launched shoved off, one of those in her urged the captain to join them.

"No," replied Captain Martin, "there is not much chance for the boat; there is none for the ship, your duty is done, mine is to remain here, and I will go down with the passengers, but I wish you God-speed and safe to land."

These are all often-told stories—that of the wreck of the *Dunbar* was told to me by the only survivor, still alive, and now the chief lighthouse-keeper at Newcastle, New South Wales. The *Dunbar*, on a wild night in August 1857, went ashore on the South Head of Sydney Harbour, and out of 121 persons on board, one

only escaped. The vessel was a crack clipper, her passengers were mostly well-to-do Australians returning to their homes after a trip to the old country, and the cargo lost in her was worth £22,000. Exactly how the disaster happened no one can tell, but it appears that the captain, finding the ship dangerously close to the towering sandstone cliffs, attempted to wear, but it was too late; she struck, and a heavy sea toppled her over, broadside outwards. This happened at ten at night, and nothing was known on shore until the following midday when men saw floating wreckage and mangled dead bodies jammed between the rocks. What happened to able seaman Johnston is here told in his own words :—

" I was eventually washed off the wreck, and driven up under the cliffs, where I succeeded in securing hold of a projecting rock. I remained there until such time as the ship broke up. Up to this time the *Dunbar* acted as a breakwater, but as she broke up I had to clear out. I managed to scramble from one ledge of a rock to another, till I reached one 20 ft. high from where I was washed up. It was about midnight on a Thursday when I first caught the rock, and I remained there till noon on the following Saturday (in all thirty-six hours). On the Saturday the sea went down, and I dropped from one ledge of rock to another, till I could see the top of the cliffs overhead. I saw one man there in the morning, but before I could attract his attention, I was forced to return to my retreat owing to three big seas following one another, looking as if they would wash me away. When I next returned I saw about a dozen men on the cliff, and soon after a rope was lowered, which, at first attempt, did not reach me. It was hauled up

again and weighted, and on being lowered I caught hold of it, and made it fast to myself, and was hauled up."

A more remarkable escape even than that of Johnston's was that of a passenger in the British India steamer *Quetta*, which struck a rock in Torres Straits in February 1890, when about 150 out of 282 persons were drowned. Two women only out of the many on board were saved, and one of them, Miss Lacy, was picked up after keeping herself afloat by swimming and floating on her back for twenty hours! And here is another curious instance: In August 1852, the ship *Maise* of Queenstown, when off Malta, was struck by lightning and foundered instantly. The lightning passed down the mainmast, literally cutting the vessel in two. The master by a lucky accident caught a spar and kept himself afloat for seventeen hours, when he was picked up by a Maltese sailing vessel; he was the only survivor. This is an accident that we never hear of now, but which was quite common a hundred years ago, before it was thought worth while to run a lightning conductor from the royal masthead to the water.

The wrecks of convict transports between 1833 and 1835 were of so terrible a character that even Government was awakened to the fact that the wretched prisoner had some claims to considerations of common humanity. The *Amphitrite*, in 1833, went ashore on the coast near Boulogne, the captain and surgeon refusing to release the prisoners from their irons until too late to save them, lest they should incur the monetary penalty that was then inflicted for the escape of each prisoner. Men, women, and children were kept below at the point of the bayonet; a hundred and more of their bruised

bodies washed upon the French coast was an appeal not strong enough to move the authorities to frame better regulations.

Two years later, the *George the Third* discovered the danger of D'Entrecasteaux's Channel leading to the harbour of Hobart, Tasmania, by running upon a rock. The prisoners rushed to the hatchway to try and save themselves, and were fired upon by the guard, and more than half the 200 on board were drowned. Within a month the *Neva* struck upon King's Island in Bass Straits; 22 out of 240 were saved. The *Governor Phillip*, in 1848, struck a sandbank off Cape Barren Island on the Tasmanian coast, when by the courage of one man most of those on board were saved. The convicts rushed on deck, and the seamen who were getting out the boats were surrounded by a panic-stricken mob. Lieutenant Griffiths, the officer in command of the guard, addressed them kindly and calmly, solemnly promising to remain on the vessel until the last man was clear of her. The boats were lowered and the convicts rowed to the shore, while Griffiths remained quietly knocking the irons off his prisoners. All but four men were in safety when the vessel sank, and the last seen of the soldier was while trying to save these four; but he went down with them.

Particularly dangerous points on coasts would, one might reasonably expect, be given a wide berth by ship-masters, but the modern mail steamer goes ashore on them just the same as in the time of sails, when a lee shore was dangerous—the Manacles during fifty years has been responsible for the loss of hundreds of lives. The *Mohegan* drowned more than a hundred people when she went ashore on them in 1898, and the *Paris* followed

not many months later. Fortunately, owing to fine weather, no lives were lost, and the last-named ship was ultimately got off.

The P. & O. Company's *China*, in the same fashion, came to grief off the island of Perim in the Gulf of Aden, in March 1898 ; everybody still wonders how the disaster could have happened, as the danger was seen by many of her passengers, and by no one else until too late. Again, no lives were lost, and the ship by wonderful skill in salving was got afloat again after many months.

Lascar crews are sometimes objected to as inferior to other merchant-seamen, but whatever objections there are to Lascars for political reasons, from a personal knowledge of the true Lascar seamen I would sooner have them than many other foreigners. Between the Lascar, however, and the coolie, there is a considerable difference. Wretched coolies who know nothing of the sea are often shipped on the inferior tramp steamers, and they are dangerous. I have seen them run below and hide themselves when a heavy sea broke on board a steamer ; but I have seen Lascars obedient and cheerfully doing their duty when English seamen have hidden in the forecastle, or in place of going to the ropes have stopped to argue with their officers. The P. & O. steamer *Aden*, in 1897, bound from Yokohama to London, got into very bad weather soon after leaving Colombo, and ended by striking the eastern end of the island of Socotra. For seventeen days the ship, though a wreck, kept afloat, and during that time about seventy-five persons were either washed off or died of their sufferings.

The passengers, many of them women and children,

were no less courageous. On June 22nd they celebrated the Queen's Jubilee to keep their spirits up, though the banquet spread in the wave-washed saloon consisted of a few nuts, a small quantity of whisky, and two or three bottles of soda water. The captain, four officers, and the surgeon were drowned; besides many of the Lascar crew, in attempting to bring succour, or in moving about the wreck to find provisions, were washed overboard, and when the *Mayo*, the rescuing steamer, arrived, the Lascars were the last men to leave the wreck.

The loss of the *Drummond Castle* off Ushant, in 1896 when only 3 out of 250 persons were saved, is a terrible example of the suddenness with which a good ship, belonging to a company that has ever studied the safety of its passengers as a first consideration, can come to disaster. Fog is the reason alleged for the ship striking the rocks, and she sank in less than a quarter of an hour. There was very little panic, and fifteen minutes at eleven at night in a fog is not much time in which to launch boats. But it is quite unaccountable how so few escaped. The Breton fishermen and their wives, as the sea cast the bodies on shore, tenderly prepared them for burial, supplying their finest linen and most cherished flowers. The whole island population mourned at the simple funeral, and by their kindly acts of thoughtful sympathy did evoke such sentiment of English gratitude as should make more for a good understanding between the two nations than the speech-making of a century of Peace Societies.

In the early sea story of the Pacific, the Barrier Reef, and Bass Strait, and other dangerous points on the little-known Australian coast, were hidden dangers, until ship

after ship left her ribs as a beacon for the whalers and sealers. Now, when the coast should be, and is, well-known, with the greatest regularity every year one or more of the fine coastal steamers come to grief—the current is always stronger than was expected ; or something must have gone wrong with the compasses—the excuse always amounts to the same thing, the land is too close, the ship never too close to the land. But when the disaster does happen, whatever lack of care or unforeseen cause has led to it, the spirit of the British sailor in Australian waters is the same, and I could name many instances of masters and officers bred on the Pacific who have died at their posts as bravely as the older race of seamen at home.

The loss of the Channel Island steamer *Stella*, in March 1899, is still fresh in the memory. Of about 180 persons on board 110 were saved, though after the ship struck she did not remain afloat a quarter of an hour. From the captain, who went down with his ship, to the smallest boy of the crew, every one's first thought was for the passengers. This inscription upon a recently erected monument shows how one member of the crew behaved :—

“In memory of the heroic death of Mary Ann Rogers, stewardess of the *Stella*, who, amid the confusion and terror of shipwreck, aided all the passengers under her charge to quit the vessel in safety, giving her own life-belt to one who was unprotected. Summoned in her turn to make good her escape, she refused, lest she might endanger the heavily-laden boat. Cheering the departing crew with the friendly cry of ‘Good-bye ! Good-bye !’ she was seen a few moments later, as the *Stella* went down, lifting her arms upward with the prayer, ‘God have me !’ then sank in the water with the sinking ship. Actions such as these—steadfast performance of duty in face of death, ready self-sacrifice for the sake of others, reliance on God—constitute the glorious heritage of

our English race. They deserve perpetual commemoration ; because among the trivial pleasures and sordid strife of the world they recall to us for ever the nobility and love-worthiness of human nature."

When the *Wairarapa* ran full speed in a fog on the Great Barrier Island, New Zealand, in October 1894, drowning 115 persons, the stewardess, Miss M'Quaid, went quietly about her duty in the saloon, serving out life-belts to the women passengers. At the same moment as the ship was going down, she caught sight of a little child without a belt. Taking her own off, she stooped over the child, and was fastening the belt around its waist when a sea came and swept them both away.

Occasionally we hear of cases when sailors do not seem to have forgotten how to handle boats. On August 25th, 1896, the steamer *Patrician*, when 400 miles east of Australia, encountered a gale that left her a wreck, and Captain Stirling enclosed in a bottle and threw overboard a farewell message to his friends. On the 28th the masts were cut away, the boats all stove in, the gale blew as hard as ever, and the ship, a dismal wreck, lay helpless in a sea that all on board agreed no boat could live in—if boat there had been to launch. Then the steamer *Fifeshire*, Captain Wilson, bound from Sydney to New Zealand, hove in sight. The captain of the *Patrician* hoisted a signal, asking if the steamer would risk taking the crew off. The *Fifeshire* answered, "We will do so if possible." Then the steamer was skilfully manœuvred, and an attempt was made to lower a boat, but owing to the terrible sea and the rolling of the steamer, the boat was crushed, the bridge, the bulwarks, and other

fittings smashed, and Mr Ross, the chief officer, injured. Mr Forder, the third officer of the *Fifeshire*, offered to swim off to the sinking ship with a line, but Captain Wilson, knowing that the attempt must end in death, refused to allow him. After further manœuvring, another attempt to launch a boat was successful. Notwithstanding his injuries, Mr Ross took charge, but he had to push off with only two men—Mouatt, the boatswain, and Martin, a quartermaster.

These three men persevered in their heroic work, and after tremendous exertion approached the *Patrician*. When nearing her a tremendous sea caught the boat and took her right over the taffrail of the *Patrician*, but the backwash fortunately carried her back into the sea without having touched anything. By means of a line the crew of the *Patrician* were got on board the boat, and by the same means transferred to the *Fifeshire*, this necessitating two journeys. The crew of the boat had to be taken on board in the same manner, and as it would have been hazardous to have attempted to take the boat on board, it was abandoned.

Captain Stirling thus described his rescue:—“Notwithstanding the injuries the chief officer had received, and quite forgetful of himself, he again bravely offered to risk his life in saving those of his fellowmen by taking charge of the boat. The boatswain and the quartermaster, were equally willing to sacrifice their lives, and they seemed to be going to certain death by facing such a sea. One may imagine it, when at times, the hull of the *Fifeshire*, as seen from the wreck, would entirely disappear in the trough of the waves. It was solely due to their wonderful courage and perseverance, and the skilful

manner in which Mr Ross and his crew handled the boat, that they reached the wreck. Had it not been for Captain Wilson, who handled his ship in such seaman-like manner, rendering valuable assistance to the lifeboat, all efforts would have proved fruitless, as the *Fifeshire* is a very large ship, and having a heavy gale and high sea to contend with, it was extremely difficult to keep her in position."

Careless navigation of coastal and ferry steamers has led to great loss of life during the century. The wreck of the *Rothsay Castle*, running between Liverpool and Anglesea in 1831, by which 130 lives were lost, was a shocking example of gross neglect on the part of those responsible. The vessel was a sixteen years old wooden paddle-boat. She put to sea in rough weather, was carelessly navigated by a drunken skipper, and was ultimately allowed to drift ashore on the Dutchman's Bank, where she fell to pieces, and her panic-stricken passengers and cowardly crew were drowned in shallow water, and in such circumstances that if the steamer had possessed a boat that would have kept together, or her crew had done their duty in the least degree honestly, every one might have been saved.

The *Princess Alice*, an iron paddle excursion steamer, running between London and Gravesend, was cut down in September 1878 by the steamer *Bywell Castle*. The excursion steamer was abreast of Woolwich on her return trip at about eight o'clock in the evening, and the *Bywell Castle*, an iron screw steam collier, was outward bound. By some mistake the rule of the road was not observed, and, too late, the steamers went astern. The disaster was so

sudden—the *Princess Alice* sinking the moment after she was struck—that 670 out of 800 persons on board were drowned, many of them crushed to death in their frantic attempts to make their way up the narrow staircase from the saloon to the deck. Whatever error of judgment brought about the disaster, one man at anyrate—Branksome, the second mate of the *Bywell Castle*—deserves praise for his courage and coolness; by his exertions a score at least of people were saved.

One new form of accident which has sprung from the going out of sails, is that of the helpless steamer with the broken propeller shaft. As late as 1899, in a modern ocean-going steamer the people on board had an experience, if not so tragic, almost as dreary, as that undergone by the Ancient Mariner. The steamer *Perthshire* broke her propeller shaft when about midway between New Zealand and New South Wales, and drifted helpless for seven weeks. Fortunately there was plenty to eat on board, and the weary waiting for help was the worst hardship suffered by those on the ship, which was searched for by at least a dozen vessels, and ultimately picked up just as the shaft was repaired well enough to move the propeller and make steerage way. There have been two or three similar instances within the last couple of years, and until twin screws and duplicate engines become universal, it is difficult to see how such accidents can be guarded against.

The New Zealand Shipping Company's steamer, *Waikato*, left London on May 4, 1899, bound for New Zealand ports. On June 5, when she was about 180 miles south of Cape Agulhas, her tail-shaft broke,

and the subsequent proceedings on board are here told in the words of the second officer: "Sail was set, but, thereafter, for many days the vessel drifted hither and thither, and often crossed her old tracks. On July 28 we sighted the barquentine *Tukora*. She promised to give us a tow, but after having got the line aboard it parted, and she stood off until the following day. Next day we got another line aboard. It was then dead calm, with a moderate swell. Unfortunately she started to bear down on us, forcing her captain to cut the tow-line, and attempt to get her upon the port tack. The sternway she had, however, forced her to crash into us. Very luckily but little damage was done to either ship. No one was to blame for the collision, which was inevitable. She then signalled us she could render no more assistance, and after promising to report us as soon as possible, stood away. On August 2 we sighted the Danish ship *Aalbuy*, bound to Lyttelton, N.Z.; the captain refused to tow us, but waited till we could send a boat aboard with letters. He also furnished us with spare biscuits. As our company's *Ruahine* might be in that locality about the evening of the 16th, we determined to get on the track, if possible, and keep a good lookout for her.

"Provisions now giving out, we overhauled the cargo for something to replace them. Tinned herrings and sardines, Dutch cheeses, and a quantity of seed peas were all we could get, and we felt the want of flour very keenly. From the 9th to the 15th we drifted about 160 miles due east. We were 40 miles from the company's track on the 16th, but were unfortunately in a thick fog. We missed the *Ruahine*. On the 22nd, with a fresh

wind, we were running along with all sails set, when, suddenly, a terrific gust came down on us and carried everything before it save the foresail. The fore-topsail and the staysail were the only sails repairable. Luckily, we had a spare lower-topsail. Good and bad weather followed alternately until September 1, when we sighted the barque *Banca*, but she could not help us. The holds were frequently rummaged for provisions, but little else could be found than fish, peas, and cocoa, of which we had got heartily tired. On September 8 the barque *Alice* was sighted, and gave us a generous contribution to our stores, consisting of two barrels of beef, three of flour, and five spare sails. We had now come so far east as to be as near to Australia as to the Cape, and we decided to make for the former. On the 15th the steamer *Asloun* was sighted, and, responding to distress signals, came alongside, and promised to give us a tow to Fremantle, whither she was bound. On the 18th, in a heavy sea, the towline parted, and was replaced with great difficulty, the men in the boat having many narrow escapes from being dashed to pieces against the vessel's side. When we reached Amsterdam Island the *Asloun* required re-coaling, so we coaled her with 110 tons by means of our boats, using the lifeboats as lighters. It was a very difficult job, and all hands worked right through the night, almost without food, and until noon next day. No one aboard either ship had ever heard of such a thing as this coaling having been done at sea before with ship's boats. On the 28th a heavy gale was met with, and there was a big strain on the tow-rope. At 8.30 A.M., when the gale was at its height, the line suddenly snapped, then we fell off rapidly before the wind. The decks were

flooded with water. There was no sign of the *Asloun*, and great fears were entertained for her safety. Next day the wind decreased; but the *Asloun* was not sighted until the afternoon. Another tow-line was taken aboard her, when it was ascertained she had a very narrow escape, having started her funnel and sustained other damage. Heavy weather was experienced between then and the 7th October, but the line held till the latter date. Rottnest Island, off Fremantle, was reached, and the pilot boarded the *Asloun*. The tow-rope then touched bottom, and parted, and we had to anchor. The *Penguin* towed us to the roads. We had travelled 4452 miles after having broken down, and before being picked up. We were towed 2521 miles. Altogether the passage from port to port occupied 157 days, and we consider it a record one. All are well on board. The *Waikato* was picked up by the *Asloun* in latitude 39° 30' S., longitude 64° 40'. Captain Barnet, of the *Asloun*, states that it was the most trying voyage of its kind on record. He would not go through the same experience for all the money in the Bank of England."

But the people on such a steamer are better off than were certain sailors I took some small part in succouring about twenty years ago. We were in a sailing ship and were about half-way between the Azores and the mouth of the Channel. A severe gale had left us pretty well battered, but on the morning, when it had gone down enough for us to make sail, we sighted a ship evidently worse off, for she was flying signals of distress. We bore down and hailed her to send a boat; all but one of ours had been smashed to matchwood in the gale. The

distressed ship was a big Nova Scotiaman, and as we passed under her stern her captain answered our hail so feebly, that we could only just make out words to the effect that the ship's company had not strength enough in them to lower their boat. We could see this for ourselves, for the men were almost crawling on all fours to trim the makeshift sails that were rigged upon their jury masts. In time we got a boat out and heard the story. The ship had been "pooped"—that is, been overtaken when running before the sea by a great wave—and this had smashed in her whole stern. All the stores carried were in a lazarette under the cabin, and every particle of food had been destroyed by the water washing about in the storeroom. For nine days the timber cargo keeping the ship afloat, all hands lived in the forecastle, sustaining life on some substance that was shown to us to guess its nature. Our people guessed all sorts of things, from pump-leather to dead rats; and were wrong. This food was fished for in buckets from the storeroom, and was the mud lying at the bottom of it, accumulated by the wash of the sea upon the stores. The Nova Scotia skipper came off in our boat, and was requested by the steward to take a seat at the cabin table—breakfast would be on in a few moments; and our skipper was shaving. I was in the storeroom getting up biscuits for the starving crew, and my head was just level with the feet of the cabin table, and I looked curiously at the tall half-starved "Blue Nose" who had gone through such an experience. We had killed our last pig the day before, and pork chops were for breakfast. The steward put them on the table and went back to the galley for coffee. The visitor sniffed the dish with satisfaction and longing; the smell tempted

him to raise the cover and peep at the delights to come ; the sight of the chops was too much, he snatched one—it was swallowed in a moment—there were two others ; the Nova Scotiaman looked furtively at the closed door of the captain's room, hesitated an instant, then put the cover back on an empty dish.

"Glad to be of service to you, captain," said our skipper, coming out of his room.

"Guess I am mighty glad to hev fell in with yer," answered the Nova Scotiaman.

"Well, you came at the right time, sir, I have two or three pork chops for breakfast, and—"

"You hed, cap'an, you hed, but for a nine days hungry man to smell 'um while you shaved was—well, you know!"

Not so hungry was the half-starved old salt to whom I offered food, and who said "if 'twas all the same to me he'd wait, but would be glad of a chaw of terbacc'er fust;" and still hungrier was the young sailor who was handed an eight-pound tin of Danish butter to hold a moment while some one brought him biscuits, and who, before he could be stopped, had ladled, with his hand, down his throat, half the contents of the tin, and was never the worse of it. The ship was supplied with stores, sails, spars, and nautical instruments, all of which, except her lower-masts, had gone in the storm, and, curiously enough, her men so effectually rigged her up again, that falling in with a lucky slant of wind which we missed, she reached London before we did.

The chapter is already too long, and yet not half long enough to be a complete wreck list of the century.

CHAPTER X

EXPLORATION

Arctic and Antarctic Expeditions—The North-West and the
North-East Passages—The Search for Franklin.

“COOK’S old ship, the *Discovery*, has been removed from Woolwich, and is now moored off Deptford as a receiving hulk for convicts.” The extract is from a newspaper of 1834, and a year later the wife of the great navigator died, having survived long enough to see the continent her husband may be said to have discovered a flourishing British colony. In the closing years of the eighteenth and in the beginning of the nineteenth centuries, most of our sea exploration was a continuation of the work of Cook, Vancouver, and other famous discoverers.

Nearly every ship bound to Australia, upon its departure from the penal settlements, returned *via* the East, or went whaling among the islands, continually making fresh South Sea discoveries, or verifying the surveys of former ships. There is an intimate connection between the discoverers and the discovered, from Cook down to the middle of the century. Bligh served under Cook, and long after Cook was dead Bligh was again in the Pacific, adding something to our knowledge of that ocean. The Kings, father and son, the Short-

lands, father and son—two generations of naval officers, in two families—charted many miles of the Australian coast, and Sir John Franklin, who was afterwards Governor of Tasmania, and became one of the most famous Arctic explorers, served as a midshipman under Flinders, who, with Bass, first discovered that Tasmania was an island. By land and sea, naval officers, early in the century, were exploring; the names of Clapperton and of Tuckey are important in the story of African exploration, and are only two of many.

Guthrie's Geography of 1808 sums up "the islands of the South Sea, and late discoveries" in a dozen pages; mentions Sandwich, Tahiti, the Society Islands, the Navigators, the Friendly, the Pelews, and New Guinea, as savage islands; gives a paragraph to New Zealand, with a short description of the Maoris, and states a belief that if the country were settled by Europeans they could live in comfort there. Of New Holland it affirms that it is the largest island in the world, that Van Diemen's Land has just been discovered to be a separate island, and that the eastern part of the big island has been taken possession of by England for a penal settlement on the sea coast, "but beyond this fact nothing is known of the country."

By the end of the first fifty years of the century our naval officers had done such surveying work that, excepting certain small islands, and detailed charts of the groups in remote parts of the Pacific, there was little left to be charted. At this end of the century it is practically correct to state that there are no undiscovered islands left, no group without its chart, and the work now going on is merely that of keeping up to date.

Of important voyages of discovery, or for scientific purposes, as understood by the term a century ago, there are few within the last hundred years. Captain Murray Maxwell, in H.M.S. *Alceste*, in company with a store-ship, and the *Lyra*, brig-of-war, Captain Basil Hall, in 1816, left England to convey an embassy to China. After landing the British Ambassador, Lord Amherst, the two war-vessels sailed on a surveying cruise. On this voyage the principal fruits were minute surveys of Corea and the Foo-Chow Islands.

The voyage of the *Beagle*, 1826-36, on the survey of Magellan Strait and the west coast of South America, was made famous by Darwin's account of it. In voyages of scientific investigation, such as deep-sea sounding, examining the bottom of the ocean, and mapping it, the voyage of the *Challenger*, 1872-73, is the principal.

But in Arctic and Antarctic explorations the work of this century far eclipses all that was done in the last. A comparison between the maps of Sir John Barrow, 1818, and Delisle, 1715, shows that between those dates practically no progress had been made in Arctic exploration. When the century opened, the problem of the North-West and North-East Passages, the outlining of the northern coast of America, and the discovery of the islands on the north of the northern continents, the search for the Pole and the magnetic Pole, were what remained to be accomplished; and there could be no thought of attempting it while we were at war. But interest in this branch of science was renewed in 1817, when William Scoresby, junior, transmitted to Sir Joseph Banks the results of his discoveries in northern regions. Young Scoresby was the son of a Scotch whaling skipper, and with his father made

several voyages to the Greenland seas. He afterwards attended Edinburgh University, and later Cambridge, where he was ordained. The results of the work of the Scoresbys, father and son, were the discovery of "about 2000 square leagues of the Greenland or (Spitzbergen) Sea between 74° and 80°, perfectly void of ice." The report further stated that the navigator had been enabled "to penetrate within sight of the Eastern coast of Greenland to a meridian usually considered inaccessible."

This discovery of an open sea caused a sensation in the scientific world, and gave Sir Joseph Banks, President of the Royal Society, and Sir John Barrow, Secretary of the Admiralty, strong argument in favour of an expedition; and the Government decided to equip two. One of these under Captain John Ross, in the *Isabella*, and Lieutenant W. E. Parry, in the *Alexander*, was to search for a North-West Passage; the other, the *Dorothea*, under Captain D. Buchan, and the *Trent*, under Lieutenant John Franklin, was to attempt an approach to the North Pole.

Ross! Parry! Franklin! How familiar are the names to us now. Ross, then forty-one years of age, the son of a Scotch minister, had served with distinction in the French wars, and was now to make his first voyage in the ice regions. Parry, also forty-one years of age, the son of a Bath physician, had served against the Danes in 1808, and two years later was protecting North Sea whalers; in this duty, at twenty years of age, navigating for the first time in ice regions, and now he was to sail on the first of five famous Arctic voyages. Franklin, thirty-two years old, having fought at Copenhagen and surveyed under Flinders, having been

shipwrecked on the Barrier Reef, and having fought in a notable sea fight on his way home, and again at Trafalgar, and yet again at New Orleans, was to begin his career as an Arctic explorer, and twenty-five years later end it, leaving his name an imperishable remembrance in the hearts of his countrymen.

Ross, in company with many afterwards distinguished scientists—J. C. Ross, his nephew, Sabine, and Hoppner, among them—sailed on May 3, 1818, and overtaking the ice-bound whaling fleet at Hare Island in $70^{\circ} 43' N.$, $57^{\circ} W.$, pushed northwards, until he reached north of Melville Bay, where he met the northernmost Greenlanders, Eskimo, or, as Ross aptly called them, Arctic Highlanders. The voyage is remembered for Ross's discovery of that mirage he named the "Croker Mountains," the site of which was a year later sailed over by Parry.

Buchan, with whom were Franklin, Frederick Beechy, and George Back, after battling with the pack north of Spitzbergen for some weeks and getting the ships badly knocked about, abandoned the attempt on the Pole and returned to England. Beechy, describing an incident of the voyage when the vessels were forced by a furious gale to take refuge among the ice, wrote: "If ever the fortitude of seamen was fairly tried, it was assuredly not less so on this occasion, and I could not conceal the pride I felt in witnessing the bold and decisive tone in which Franklin, the commander of our little vessel, issued his orders, and the promptitude and steadiness with which those orders were carried out by the crew."

Directly Ross returned, it was decided to despatch another expedition, and the command of it was given to

Parry, who was in the *Hecla* of 375 tons, accompanied by the *Griper* of 180 tons, commanded by Lieutenant Liddon. Captain Sabine, the leading magnetic observer of the day, was one of the officers of this expedition.

The ships sailed in May 1819, and after examining Lancaster Sound, and sailing over the site of Ross's "Croker Mountains," on September 4, 1819, Parry crossed the meridian of 110° W., thus securing the bounty offered by the British Government to "such of His Majesty's subjects as might succeed in penetrating thus far to the westward, within the Arctic circle."

Parry went into winter quarters at Melville Island, his crew having in three days cut a channel in the ice to admit the ships for a distance of two and a third miles. During the winter, amusements were organised, theatrical performances, a weekly newspaper, *The North Georgia Gazette and Winter Chronicle*, edited by Sabine, being two features of the many devices by which "the gloomy prospects which would sometimes obtrude on the stoutest hearts" were diverted; and in this care for his crew, Parry set the example which has happily been followed by his successors. The cold was so intense that the thermometer sometimes registered 55°, and it was often 76° below freezing point. On one of the coldest nights the house on shore caught fire, and in the work of saving the instruments sixteen men incurred frost bite, notwithstanding that while the men were working at the fire the surgeons kept continually going from man to man, and rubbing their faces with snow.

Before wintering, Parry had opened up Lancaster Sound, discovering many fine waterways; Barrow Strait, Wellington Channel, Melville Sound and Island, are his discoveries, and he reached, before turning east again,

114° W. The ships were freed on August 8, 1820, and the expedition arrived in England in November, having made such an unprecedented success that, in May 1821, Parry was again sent out to continue the work.

The vessels, this time, were the *Fury*, under Parry, the *Hecla*, under Lyon, and the officers included Ross, Buchan, Hoppner, and Crozier. Parry's orders were to penetrate to the westward through Hudson's Strait, reach the coast of the continent of America, and following it northward, seek a passage to the westward from the Atlantic to the Pacific. It had been held since 1742 that the North-West Passage was through Frozen Strait, but the error of this route Parry settled by proving that it was completely landlocked.

Early in September Parry's ship lost an anchor after being nearly wrecked, and the vessel was driven to almost the same position she had been in a month earlier. New ice and increasing cold being experienced in October, Parry was compelled to take up winter quarters at Winter Island. On July 12, 1822, he sailed north again, and after discovering Hecla and Fury Strait, wintered again in Arctic regions. Parry intended to send the *Hecla* home, and in the *Fury*, with a picked crew, once more go north, but owing to the continued exposure telling on the health of his men, he was obliged to abandon the idea, and the two ships were headed for home, and arrived on October 10, 1823.

The third voyage, in 1824-25, proved unsuccessful; one of Parry's vessels—the *Fury*—was lost, and with this disaster the expedition came to an end. Parry did not again attempt the North-West Passage, although in 1827 he tried to reach the North Pole. He sailed in

the *Hecla* in April, and leaving his vessel at Turenberg Bay, started in boats fitted on runners, with which the party made a thirty-five days' journey over the ice, encountering enormous difficulties from drift ice. They reached $82^{\circ} 45'$ N. on July 23, the farthest north till Markham's record forty-five years later. Then the party turned and gained the ship after being absent from her sixty-one days. This was the last expedition Parry made; he afterwards went to Australia, and there very successfully managed a great agricultural company, returning to England in 1835, where he received at different times several civil appointments. He died in 1855.

In 1827, Sir John Ross suggested another attempt to discover the North-West Passage, this time in a steamer, but the Admiralty would offer no encouragement, soon afterwards withdrawing the offer of £20,000, which had been for some years held out as an encouragement for the discovery of the Passage. Then Felix Booth, Sheriff of London, came forward, and chiefly at his private expense fitted out the *Victory*, a paddle steamer of 150 tons—the first steam vessel to enter ice regions, and probably the least suitable design of ship for cruising among ice. She left England in May 1829, and returned in October 1833—this expedition of four and a half years having cost the London distiller who had made it possible £17,000, and earned him a baronetcy.

The *Victory* during her voyage entered Lancaster Sound and passed to Prince Regent Inlet. Three winters were spent on the most northern peninsula of America, appropriately named by the explorers Boothia Felix; and during the intervening time young James Ross, nephew of Sir John, determined the position of the North

Magnetic Pole, where the Union Jack was hoisted on June 1, 1831. In May 1833 Sir John Ross was compelled to abandon his vessel, and after a journey of great hardship, the expedition, by means of open boats, reached Baffin Bay, where, in August, they were picked up by a whaler and brought to England.

While Parry was exploring by sea, Franklin had been despatched to examine, in sledges and canoes, the north coast of America eastward from the Copper Mine River. Franklin's companions were Back, Hood, Dr Richardson, and a seaman named Hepburn. They left England in May 1819, and started from York Factory, Hudson's Bay, in August. After a most extraordinary journey of hardship—in which starvation, wolves, and Eskimos were encountered with indomitable courage—Franklin succeeded in exploring 550 miles of coast line to the eastward, reaching Point Turnagain ($68^{\circ} 18' N.$, $109^{\circ} 25' W.$) on August 16, 1821.

At this time the situation was so serious that after a three days' fast the last food was cooked, one of the canoes furnishing wood for the fire ; the remaining canoe became so damaged that it was abandoned, the men refusing to assist Franklin in carrying it further. The expedition had now reached within forty miles of Fort Enterprise, and Back and two men pushed on ahead for aid. Meanwhile two noble examples of bravery and self-denial were given : Dr Richardson volunteered to swim across a stream, carrying a line by which a raft could be hauled over. The doctor was a mere skeleton, and at the moment of making the attempt he had stepped on some sharp instrument, cutting his foot to the bone, and it was only with the greatest difficulty his life was saved ; the other instance was that of Perrault, a Canadian,

who, as his comrades were one night seated round a fire starving, produced a piece of meat that he had saved from his former allowance and divided it between all.

Two Indians died of sheer starvation—they had been living for days upon lichens and scraps of leather. Some of the carriers were caught stealing from the scanty stores ; and Indian hunters, sent out to forage, concealed from the party what they discovered, and when caught, fired upon the explorers, killing Lieutenant Hood, and it is suspected they had previously murdered and eaten three fellow-countrymen. With great difficulty, owing to his weakness, Dr Richardson contrived to hold a court-martial with his companion, and then shot the culprits to save Hepburn and himself. A partridge, shot at this time, was divided between Franklin and three companions, the first flesh they had tasted for thirty-one days. At last Back arrived with relief, and the expedition, in due course, reached home. In spite of the terrible hardships encountered, the only deaths were those of two Canadians from starvation, and of Hood, and the Indian hunters who were killed.

Immediately upon their return, Franklin, Richardson (afterwards Sir John), and Back volunteered for another expedition. This time they successfully reached the mouth of the Mackenzie River, and from there made many interesting discoveries, performing the work without sensational incidents, and, owing to excellent arrangements, in comparative comfort. Then in 1832, the non-return of Sir John Ross's expedition causing great anxiety in England, Back, partly financed by Government and partly by Ross's friends, set out to succour him. The Hudson's Bay Company contributed generous support, and by its liberality, Back, who, soon

after he started, was informed of Ross's safe return, was able to devote considerable time to exploring. In July 1834, Back discovered and explored the Great Fish River, following it to the Arctic Ocean ; his most northern camp was made at the eastern entrance of Simpson Strait in $68^{\circ} 14' N.$, $94^{\circ} 58' W.$ After naming King William's Land, Back turned south, wintering at Reliance, and then returning to England.

The Hudson's Bay Company, in 1837, endeavoured to fill what gaps remained in the explorations of Franklin and Back, and they chose for the work Messrs Thomas Simpson and P. W. Dease, who in a boat succeeded in connecting Return Reef with Cape Barrow, a space of about 150 miles. Later, the same explorers reached the mouth of Back's River from Cape Turnagain, and pushed to the east to Castor and Pollux Bay. In 1846-47 an expedition planned by Sir George Simpson, and commanded by Dr John Rae, succeeded in travelling round the Gulf of Akkoolee, and connecting Hudson's Bay with the discoveries of Ross, and with those of Parry during his second voyage; and in 1854, during the search for Franklin, Dr Rae united the work of Ross with that of Simpson, thus completing the exploration of the whole of the northern coast of America.

During 1823-24 the *Griper* penetrated to the east coast of Greenland in $76^{\circ} N.$, and about this time a Russian expedition, under Lieutenant (afterwards Admiral Lutke) surveyed the west coast of Nova Zembla ; and Urangell, the great Russian explorer, made four famous journeys over the ice from North Siberia ; in 1832-35 Pachtusow surveyed the east coast as far as $74^{\circ} 24' N.$; several other foreign expeditions

added considerably to the world's knowledge of Nova Zembla; in 1869 Palliser, an English sportsman, sailed half a degree north of Cape Nassau; in 1870 another expedition reached $76^{\circ} 47' N.$, and $59^{\circ} 17' E.$, 50 miles north-east of Cape Nassau; in 1871 Quale sailed east as far as $75^{\circ} 22' N.$, $74^{\circ} 35' E.$ Johannsen, a Norwegian hunter, discovered and circumnavigated Lonely Island ($77^{\circ} 31' N.$, $86^{\circ} E.$) in the sixties; and in 1871, Captain Elling Carlsen circumnavigated Nova Zembla, his ship, the *Solid* being the first vessel to enter Ice Haven since Barent's voyage, 275 years before. Many other scientists and explorers have spent much time in exploring Nova Zembla, and the result is that we have now a considerable knowledge of it.

In 1836, the Royal Geographical Society petitioned the British Government to survey the coast between Regent Inlet and Point Turnagain, with the result that the *Terror* was placed under the command of Back, who had, meanwhile, been knighted, and for his exploring services raised to the rank of captain by an order in council.

The *Terror* sailed on June 14, 1836, and her voyage, geographically considered, was a failure, but because of the startling experiences of the explorers, was remarkable. Six weeks after leaving England, in Davis' Strait an iceberg not less than 300 ft. high was sighted, and this was the forerunner of innumerable ice-floes in which the ship soon became hopelessly wedged. For nine months they were thus imprisoned, and for four of these months they were in an ice-cradle high out of water, and in continual expectation of the ship falling through and being shattered to pieces. But the *Terror* was destined for another fate, and Back and his comrades were ultimately

released and returned home, none the worse for their experience.

Antarctic exploration began when Captain Cook first crossed the Antarctic Circle in 1773, crossing it again in 1774, and a third time in 1775 ; his longitudes being respectively 40° E., between 100° and 110° W., and between 135° and 148° W., and his highest latitude reached 71° S.

Bellinghausen, a Russian, was the next voyager to enter the Antarctic circle, discovering Alexander Island (68° S., 72° W.) and Petra Island (68° S., 91° W.). This was in 1821, and the explorer sailed through several degrees of longitude, keeping just on the edge of the circle.

Few people have any idea of what Southern Ocean sailing in these high latitudes means. In 60° S. I have seen at one time, and counted for myself, eighty-five icebergs ; thirty-five of these bergs were upwards of 300 ft. in height. It was hours before we were clear of the ice, and a long while before we could see a way out. The hopeless condition of a ship pinched in these regions, the absolute certainty that in such cases her crew have no escape, makes one reflect with wonder and admiration on the skill and courage of the men who pushed the frail little vessels of sixty or seventy years ago into the seventies of the Southern Hemisphere.

In 1823 Weddel, an ex-master of the Royal Navy, the peace having left him without employment in the King's service, took a small sealing brig, the *Jane*, and a cutter, the *Beaufoy*, as far south as 74° ; though his professed object was sealing, not exploring, his account of the trip added not a little to our knowledge. Again, in 1830-32, Biscoe, another sealing captain in

charge of one of Enderby's vessels, discovered Enderby and Graham's Islands on the Antarctic Circle; and in 1839 Balleny, another of Enderby's sealers, discovered Balleny's Island ($66^{\circ} 44' S.$), and Sabrina Island, ($65^{\circ} 10' S.$). Dumont d'Urville, in 1840, went as far south as $66^{\circ} 30'$ and discovered Adélie Land; and the United States Exploring Expedition, under Commodore Wilkes, went over the ground and amplified the discoveries of the French explorer.

Then came *the Antarctic Expedition*, that of the *Erebus* and the *Terror*, under the command of Sir James Ross. Ross, it will be remembered, had accompanied Parry in all his Arctic voyages, and under his uncle, Sir John Ross, fixed the position of the North Magnetic Pole. The expedition left England in 1839, and after calling at Hobart, Tasmania, left that port on November 20, 1840, entering the Antarctic Circle on New Year's Day, 1841, in $170^{\circ} E.$

The main object of the expedition was the discovery of the South Magnetic Pole, and soon after the Circle was crossed the course was shaped accordingly. Then Ross met with a barrier—high land rising in lofty peaks. The highest point, 10,000 ft., was named Mount Sabine after the distinguished scientist. Fine weather enabled Ross to coast along the land until, in latitude $72^{\circ} S.$, longitude $171^{\circ} E.$, a landing was made on an island which he named Possession Island, where the British flag was hoisted and the usual ceremony of taking possession was performed. The weather now grew stormy, but notwithstanding this, the explorers pushed on until they reached $75^{\circ} S.$, $170^{\circ} E.$, on January 25th. Ross wrote that in this latitude "two of the mountains of

this magnificent range, named Melbourne and Mont-eagle, were here seen to great advantage; the immense crater of the former, and the more pointed summit of the latter, rose high above the contiguous mountains, forming two of the many remarkable objects of this most wonderful and magnificent mass of volcanic land."*

Three days later, Franklin Island (76° S., 168° E.) was discovered and named, and Mount Erebus, an active volcano, was discovered, its estimated height more than 12,000 ft., while near it was an extinct volcano nearly as high, named by the explorers Mount Terror. The explorers traced land to 79° S. This southernmost point they named after Parry, and the whole continent was appropriately named Victoria Land. Then they discovered the great southern ice barrier—a wall of ice from 150 to 200 ft. high, extending from 78° S. in an easterly direction about 450 miles from Mount Erebus, and estimated from the soundings to be 1000 ft. in thickness; the temperature at this season, the depth of summer, was 18° below freezing point.

It was impossible to do more; no suitable winter quarters could be found, and so the ships' heads were turned north, Balleny's and Biscoe's discoveries were confirmed, and the ships, after a severe handling in the ice, returned to Hobart, where they arrived on April 6.

What narrow escapes they had may be gathered from the fact that in a gale encountered in the pack both vessels lost their rudders, and the ships took fifty-

* Sir James Ross's *Voyage to the Southern Seas.* (John Murray, London, 1847.)

six days, heading north, to cover the same distance they had made in four days heading south. At one time the *Erebus* was an hour alongside a berg, and was compelled to set her mainsail aback in a heavy gale to make a stern board and free herself. After wintering at the Falkland Islands the ships sailed again on September 4, 1842, and made observations as far south as 71° and to longitude west $14^{\circ} 29'$. Then the ships returned to England, being paid off at Woolwich on September 23, 1843.

Meanwhile the Royal Geographical Society was renewing its agitation for the search for the North-West Passage, and the completion of the exploration of the north coast of America. Sir John Franklin at this time was fifty-nine years of age, and had just returned from Tasmania after governing the island for seven years. The return of the *Erebus* and the *Terror*, and of Franklin, suggested the ships and the man to command them. And in May, 1845, Franklin sailed with a party of 134 persons, of whom 9 left the expedition before it entered the ice; he commanded the *Erebus*, and Captain F. R. M. Crozier took charge of the *Terror*, both ships having, in the interval, been thoroughly overhauled and fitted with auxiliary screws. The last despatches from the expedition were dated Whale Fish Island, July 12, 1845. A whaler, on July 26, saw the ships moored to an iceberg, waiting for a favourable opportunity to enter Baffin's Bay. This was the last seen of them. Nothing of their fate was known until 1854. No certain traces of the explorers reached England until M'Clintock wrested from the awful silence of the polar regions the story of their ending.

The history of Arctic exploration from 1848 to 1859 is practically a record of the search for Franklin. Between these years, numerous expeditions, equipped at public and private expense, by sea and by land, joined in the search, and not one of them returned without adding considerably to our knowledge of the Arctic regions. Provisions and clothing were deposited in various places in the Arctic seas by the British and by the United States Governments. The Hudson's Bay Company lent its valuable aid, and Lady Franklin and her friends, from their private means, and of their own energy, persevered when the British Government abandoned the search as hopeless. Here is a short summary of what was done:—

The first expedition sent out by the Admiralty was H.M.S. *Plover*, first under Captain Moore, and later under Captain Maguire. She sailed from Sheerness for Behring Straits on 1st January 1848. Three months later, on 25th March a land expedition under Sir John Richardson and Dr Rae, of the Hudson's Bay Company, left England. Richardson returned in 1849, but Dr Rae continued the search till 1851. In June 1848, Sir James Ross, with the *Enterprise* and *Investigator*, sailed from England, discovered the western side of North Somerset, and returned in November 1849. Sir Leopold M'Clintock served his Arctic apprenticeship in that expedition. Two or three months after the return of Ross, the two ships sailed again under Collinson and M'Clure to search for Franklin, and M'Clure discovered the long-sought-for North-West Passage, making an honoured place for himself in the roll of Arctic explorers. Collinson, meanwhile, made a remarkable voyage along the north coast

of America. Captain Austin's expedition, consisting of the *Resolute*, the *Assistance*, Captain Ommanney, the *Intrepid*, Lieutenant Bertie Cator, and the *Pioneer*, Lieutenant Sherard Osborn, sailed in April 1850, and wintered almost in the centre of the region discovered by Parry on his first voyage. M'Clintock was with this expedition, and developed and put into practice the system of sledge travelling, which has since achieved such success. Some remarkable journeys in various directions were made by Ommanney, M'Clintock, Sherard Osborn, Frederick Mecham, Robert Aldrich, and Vesey Hamilton.

In April, 1850, the *Lady Franklin*, Captain Penny, sailed from Aberdeen for Barrow's Strait, and a month later the first American expedition in the *Advance* and the *Rescue*, under Lieutenant De Haven and Dr Kane, sailed for Lancaster Sound. The *Lady Franklin* expedition returned to England in September 1851, having discovered some small traces of the lost ship; and the American vessels, after drifting with the pack down Baffin's Bay, returned during the same year. The *Felix*, fitted out chiefly by the Hudson's Bay Company, sailed in May 1850, and returned in the following year. Captain Kellet, C.B., sailed in H.M.S. *Herald*, in 1848, and after making three voyages to Behring Strait, returned in 1851. When Austin's expedition returned in September 1851, the *Assistance*, *Resolute*, *Intrepid*, and *Pioneer*, together with H.M.S. *North Star*, were fitted out under Sir Edward Belcher, C.B. The expedition arrived at Beechy Island in August 1852, and the *Assistance* (Belcher) and *Pioneer* (Sherard Osborn) proceeded through Wellington Sound, while the *Resolute* (Kellet) and *Intrepid* (M'Clintock) went to

Melville Island, the *North Star* (Pullen) remaining at Beechy Island.

In April 1854, Sir Edward Belcher, after mature deliberation, finding that there was no chance of release from the ice, abandoned his ships, for which step, on their return to England, the captains were tried by court-martial and honourably acquitted. The *Resolute* was subsequently picked up by an American whaler a thousand miles from the spot where she was abandoned. She was taken to New York, and the United States Congress gave orders for her purchase. The American Government then thoroughly repaired and equipped the ship, and sent her across the Atlantic as a present to the Queen. When the *Resolute* was broken up in 1880, a desk was made of a portion of her hull, and the Queen presented it to the United States President.

Lady Franklin, aided by a few friends, equipped her first expedition in 1850, the *Prince Albert*, under Forsyth. She sailed in June, and returned the same year. The same vessel left again, in June 1851, for Prince Regent's inlet. This was the voyage on which Lieutenant Bellot of the French Navy volunteered and lost his life. The third of Lady Franklin's expeditions sailed, under Inglefield, in the *Isabel*, in July 1852, and returned in November of the same year. H.M.S. *Rattlesnake*, under Trollope, was despatched to assist the *Plover* at Point Barrow, returning with her to England in August 1853, and the *Isabel* made another voyage to Behring Straits in the same year. Even this list does not make mention of every attempt; yet so far no trace of the missing had been found.

Then, in 1853, the second American expedition in the *Advance* sailed, and Dr Rae shed the first ray of

light upon the mystery of Franklin's disappearance. He reported to the British Admiralty that he had purchased from a party of Eskimos a number of articles which had belonged to Sir John Franklin and to members of his expedition. The relics included Sir John's star, part of a watch, some silver plate and other articles. Dr Rae also reported that Eskimos stated they had met with a party of white men about four winters previously, and had sold them a seal; and that four months later, in the same season, they had found the dead bodies of about thirty men. Dr Rae made out the spot where this meeting was said to have taken place, to have been in the near neighbourhood of the Fish River. For their discovery, Dr Rae and his companions were awarded the £10,000 offered by Government for the first intelligence of the fate of the lost explorers.

The news gave a fresh zest to private enterprise, though the Government now ceased its efforts. In May 1854, the *Phænix*, *North Star*, and the *Talbot* searched until October. A third American expedition sailed to look for Dr Kane, who, after a journey of 1300 miles over ice to a Danish settlement, was on his way home in a Danish vessel, when Hartstene, in charge of the American ships, fell in with him. The Hudson's Bay Company, in June 1855, sent out an overland canoe party, which returned in the following September, bringing a few more Franklin relics. Then, in 1857, came the last of Lady Franklin's expeditions in the *Fox*, under M'Clintock.

M'Clintock's little party altogether numbered only twenty-five persons, of whom the names of Captain (now Sir Allen) Young, and Hobson, the first lieutenant,

were made famous by the good service they performed under their able commander.

The traces discovered by M'Clintock, aided by Dr Rae's report,* enabled the English officer in his account of the *Fox* expedition to explain, with almost certain exactness, what befell Franklin's party from the time they were last seen by the whaler in July 1845.

The *Erebus* and *Terror* passed on to Lancaster Sound and entered Wellington Channel, the southern entrance of which had been discovered by Parry in 1819. The ships sailed up that strait 150 miles, and having reached 77° N., turned southward again, either blocked by ice, or because Franklin considered it a mistake to follow a route which seemed to lead away from the known sea of America. Re-entering Barrow's Strait, the ships passed by a new channel between Bathurst and Cornwallis Islands, and then lay up for the winter of 1845-6 at Beechy Island. In 1846 they were again afloat, heading south-west, and reached to within twelve miles of the northern extremity of King William's Land, where they wintered for 1846-7. Then Lieutenant Gore was despatched with a land-exploring party, probably to connect the unknown coast line of King William's Land between Point Victory and Cape Herschel. At Point Victory, Lieutenant Hobson, of M'Clintock's search expedition, on 6th May 1859, found an ordinary Admiralty current paper on which Gore had written that all was well, and that a small party had left the ships on a land expedition. This paper was dated 28th May 1847. But around the margin of this document, in the handwriting of Fitzjames, the

* *Fate of Franklin and his Discoveries*—M'Clintock. John Murray, London, 1859.

last ten words added by Crozier, the following had been written :—

"April 25, 1848.—H.M. Ships *Terror* and *Erebus* were deserted on April 22nd, 5 leagues N.N.W. of this, having been beset since September 12, 1846. The officers and crews, consisting of 105 souls, under the command of Captain F. R. M. Crozier, landed in latitude $69^{\circ} 37' 42''$ N., longitude $98^{\circ} 41'$ W. This paper was found by Lieut. Irving under the cairn supposed to have been built by Sir James Ross in 1831, 4 miles to the northward, where it had been deposited by the late Commander Gore in June 1847. Sir James Ross's pillar has not, however, been found ; and the paper has been transferred to this position, which is that in which Sir James Ross's pillar was erected. Sir John Franklin died on June 11, 1847, and the total loss by death in the expedition has been to this date, 9 officers and 15 men.

(Signed) F. R. M. CROZIER, Captain and Senior Officer.
JAMES FITZJAMES, Captain H.M.S. *Erebus*.

And start on to-morrow, 26th, for Back's Fish River."

The *Erebus* and *Terror* were only provisioned up to July 1848, and these simple words, a message from the grave, in that sentence, "Start to-morrow for Back's Fish River," told more than could a volume that the explorers, rather than perish without an effort, were about to make a last bold and painfully hopeless struggle to reach civilisation.

M'Clintock, following his lieutenant Hobson's tracks at the western extremity of King William's Land, came to a deserted boat, containing two incomplete human skeletons, many articles of clothing, some books, nautical instruments, silver plate, and other relics, which, with those found by Dr Rae, are now treasured in the Museum of Greenwich Hospital and that of the United

States Service Institution. No traces of the ships were seen, only these personal belongings—sad evidence that, as was told by an Eskimo old woman, "they fell down and died as they walked along."

Twenty years later, in 1879, Lieutenant Schwatka, in an overland expedition, discovered more remains of Franklin's party, and the bones of Lieutenant John Irving, of the *Terror*, were brought away and buried at Edinburgh in January 1881. This was the last of the search for Franklin—a quest that had lasted for nearly forty years, and in the course of it had trained more than one generation of Arctic explorers.

The object of Franklin's expedition was the discovery of the North-West Passage, and Franklin, on the evidence, did undoubtedly complete the discovery by filling the gap between Parry's Melville Island and Back's Fish River; but before this evidence of Franklin's success was brought to light, M'Clure, on October 26, 1850, when with his sledge party he saw from Bank's Land away to the north, "the frozen waters of Melville Straits, with no land between us and Melville Island," had discovered a North-West Passage.

For fifteen years after the return of M'Clintock, England neglected polar exploration, but in that time several foreign expeditions were sent out. In 1853-55 the American brig *Advance* wintered within the entrance of Smith Sound, and an exploring party from her went for some distance up the east side of the channel. In 1860 Dr Hayes wintered near the same spot, and made a sledge journey up the west side. Ten years later, in 1871, Captain Hall, in the *Polaris*, succeeded in passing up the channels leading north from Smith Sound. Hall died in the autumn, but the expedition

attained $82^{\circ} 11'$ N., and wintered in $81^{\circ} 38'$ N., up to that date the highest latitude reached.

Then the British Government woke up again and equipped the *Alert* and *Discovery*. The command was given to Captain (afterwards Sir George) Nares, and the expedition sailed in 1875. The ships reached Cape Sabine without difficulty, passed Cape Leiber on August 25, crossed Lady Franklin Bay, and discovered Discovery Harbour, a fine land-locked inlet. Here Nares placed the *Discovery* in winter quarters, and in the *Alert* pushed northward, reaching Floeberg Beach in $82^{\circ} 25'$ N. and 62° W. Thus Nares beat Hall's record, the *Alert* having reached farther north than the *Polaris*. The *Alert*'s company wintered on the shores of the Polar Sea, and sledge parties were engaged preparing depots for the Spring, eight men being frost-bitten in carrying on the work. Lieutenant Pelham Aldrich exceeded Parry's latitude of 1827, the modern explorer reaching $82^{\circ} 48'$. In the early spring Nares opened communication with the *Discovery*, and then attempted to accomplish the object of the expedition.

He divided his plan into two distinct undertakings, the first that of a direct sledge journey towards the Pole, and the other the exploration of the north shore of Grinnel Land. The first undertaking was intrusted to Commander (now Rear-Admiral) Markham, who, with two sledges and seventeen men, took to the Frozen Sea on April 10, 1876. The party reached $83^{\circ} 20'$ N., and 64° W. on May 12, 1876, and later, due to the energy of the leader, several of whose men had been disabled by disease, $83^{\circ} 20' 26''$ N. was gained, and the Union Jack hoisted on the spot, the most northerly point attained to that date, and until Lockwood of the

American Greely expedition in 1881-84 reached $83^{\circ} 24'$. The serious troubles of the party began before they turned back, and nothing but the extraordinary march of twenty-four hours' duration, made by Lieutenant A. C. Parr to the *Alert* for help, saved the whole party from death.

From the *Discovery* good work was meanwhile carried on in the exploration of Grinnel Land. Aldrich and his party traced 220 miles of new coast; and the shores of Grinnel Land were extended from Archer Fiord to Cape Columbia, and the Coast of Greenland was extended to Cape Britannia.

During recent years there have been several expeditions of more or less importance, fitted out by private enterprise and under foreign flags, the object being to reach the North Pole; that of Nansen and the unfortunate André are too recent to need description. Nansen proved how thoroughly correct was his drift theory, for the *Fram* reached $84^{\circ} 4' N.$ and $102^{\circ} E.$, and Nansen and his companion Johansen succeeded, after surmounting incredible difficulties, in making a sledge journey to $86^{\circ} 14' N.$ longitude, $95^{\circ} E.$, the highest latitude ever reached. This was on April 6, 1895.

While several expeditions were with varying success exploring other parts of the Arctic regions, the question of a North-East Passage remained dormant, the general opinion being that the existence of such a passage was impossible. Adolf Erik Nordenskiöld, a Finn, who had taken part in Swedish Arctic expeditions of 1858-61-64-68 and 72, and in a voyage to Greenland in 1870, was confident that he could find a channel; and in 1875, in the *Proven*, a vessel of 70 tons, he sailed on an expedition which was thoroughly successful. The *Proven*

visited Nova Zembla, passed through Jugor Strait, and anchored in the mouth of the Yenese. Here Nordenskiöld left the ship, and with a party ascended the Yenese, and came back overland, the *Proven*, meanwhile, having returned to Tromso. In the following year Nordenskiöld led another expedition to the mouth of the Yenese, and repeated successful voyages have since been made. The Swedish Government then fitted out an expedition, in response to a petition from Nordenskiöld, with the object of penetrating from the Yenese to Behring Strait, and the attempt was begun in July 1878. After much trouble the vessel reached Kolyuchin Bay, but it was impossible owing to the ice pack to proceed further. The expedition wintered off Pitlekai in $67^{\circ} 7'$ N., 123° E., and on July 30, 1879, the ice having broken up two days previously, the *Vega* rounded the East Cape and thus made the North-East Passage.

The exploration of Spitzbergen has been by no means the least important or uninteresting object of many expeditions. Although the Archipelago is uninhabited, parties have spent long periods on its shores examining its extensive flora, or killing in thousands the reindeer with which it abounded. Russians and Norwegians hunted its shores two centuries ago. Scoresby, the English explorer, made seventeen voyages to Spitzbergen, and in his *Polar Regions*, published in 1823, wrote the best account of it that had been published since Marten's in 1671. Buchan and Franklin in 1818 made pendulum and other observations on Dane Island; Clavering and Sabine followed some years later; and Parry in 1827, at Turenberg Bay, continued the work. In 1838, a French expedition, *La Rechère*,

Captain Fabvre, occupied Bell Sound, and, the following year, Magdalen Bay ; but to Sweden, more than to any other country, is due our early knowledge of the Archipelago, and Nordenskiöld, in many voyages, thoroughly examined a large area of ground. Germany, in 1868-71, made several successful explorations ; and an Austrian expedition, in 1872, eclipsed all others. Frantz Josef Land commemorates the voyage which was made by Weyprecht and Payer in the Austrian steamer *Tegethoff*. The explorers made a sledge journey to Cape Fligely in $82^{\circ} 5'$ N., were eventually compelled to abandon their ship, and reached Norway in September 1874. In modern times, English yachtsmen have done a great deal of exploring in the Archipelago, and they have been the only representatives of the flag engaged in this work.

In recent years we have in the North, the Jackson-Harmsworth expedition, and that of Peary in the *Windward*; what they have done is still part of the news of the day; and in the South we have the Antarctic expedition under Borchgrevink organised by Sir George Newnes, the results of whose work cannot be known until the year 1900 is well advanced.

CHAPTER XI

PIRATES AND MUTINEERS

The Last of the Pirates—Mutinies in the Navy—Foreigners in the Merchant Service—Remarkable Gold Robbery—Broaching Cargo.

By the beginning of the eighteenth century, the Buccaneers of the Spanish Main had degenerated into out-and-out pirates. The regular walk-the-plank, skull-and-cross-bones fellows, such as Avery, Teach, Roberts, and similar rascals, all earned their notoriety at this period, and by the beginning of the nineteenth century the true pirate, like the true highwayman, was becoming scarce, and the word "piracy" began to carry a different meaning. Blackguard merchant-seamen in ill-disciplined ships occasionally mutinied and seized the vessel on which they were serving, but in time of peace there were too many war-vessels available for such ruffians to remain long unpunished, and before they could do much mischief they were captured, and Execution Dock saw the last of them.

The nearest approach in this century to the pirate proper was in the person of Benito de Soto, a Portuguese, who began his career in a slaver belonging to Buenos Ayres in 1827. The vessel left Buenos Ayres for the coast of Africa with

a crew made up chiefly of Spanish, French, and Portuguese rascals, and the mate of the ship was a notorious ruffian. De Soto was before the mast, and the mate for some reason took a fancy to him as being a likely fellow to help him in a design to seize the ship, which was put in execution at an hour when the captain was on shore arranging with the slave-agent for the charges on the freight of slaves.

Twenty-two of the crew joined the mutineers and eighteen refused; De Soto then served out arms to his companions, declared the mate was now in command, and compelled the loyal men to enter a boat. They were then cut adrift, and the vessel, which had been hove to about ten miles from the land, was put to sea. A strong breeze sprang up and a heavy surf rolled upon the beach, and those in the boat were all drowned in attempting to effect a landing. The sun was setting as the ship left the land, and by nightfall most of the pirates were drunk, the newly-elected commander having himself set the example by breaking into the spirit-room. This exactly suited De Soto's purpose; as soon as the mate had drunk himself into a stupor, and most of the crew were incapable of protesting, De Soto deliberately put a pistol to the head of his leader and shot him dead, threatening to serve the first man who should protest in the same manner. The drunken crew, so far from protesting, hailed him as a fine fellow, and promised to follow De Soto to the death. Their first business was to get rid of the slaves, and this they did by taking the vessel to the West Indies and there successfully selling them. De Soto renamed his ship the *Defensor De Pedro*, and

having refitted and provisioned her, sailed out in quest of prey.

In a few months' cruising in West Indian waters he fell in with several vessels, plundering them, and generally murdering the crews; in one instance, that of an American brig, the pirates accomplished this by battenning all hands below and then setting fire to the ship. Then De Soto, cruising off Ascension, fell in with the *Morning Star*, an English vessel bound from Ceylon to England. He overhauled this ship, and the captain of her, having no weapons, struck his colours. De Soto thereupon sent a party to take possession, and with orders to kill all the people. The pirates, however, after committing most horrible atrocities on men, women, and children who were passengers, and killing a few, battenned the rest below, and then got drunk. Having lost a good deal of time in these proceedings, they loaded their boats with such valuables as they could collect, and boring several holes in the ship's bottom, returned to their own vessel.

De Soto, imagining that his men had killed the people on the *Morning Star*, sailed away; but a day later, learning what had really occurred, put about with the intention of murdering any survivors, but he could find no trace of the *Morning Star*, and so inferred that she had gone down. As a matter of fact, however, the unfortunate creatures had managed to break open the hatches, and a passing vessel had seen them just in time and taken them on board. The *Morning Star* went to the bottom, but most of her people eventually reached England and made public their sad story. De Soto, meanwhile, shaped his course for Spain, intending to make the harbour of Corunna. Off the port he fell

in with a small merchantman, boarded, plundered, and sank her, drowning all the crew but one man, whom he retained to act as pilot. As they were nearing the harbour with this man at the helm, De Soto said to him, "Is this the entrance?" "Yes." "Very well, my man, you have done well, I am obliged to you," and taking a pistol from his belt, he shot the pilot dead. At Corunna the pirate succeeded in selling his plunder; and obtaining ship's papers in a false name, he set sail for Cadiz, but on a dark night, in bad weather, his vessel missed stays, and went ashore. The crew succeeded in escaping in the boats, and De Soto then arranged that they should march overland to Cadiz, there represent themselves as honest shipwrecked mariners, and sell what remained of the wreck. At Cadiz, however, in some way, the authorities grew suspicious and arrested six of the pirates, but were not quick enough with the others, who escaped, De Soto managing to reach Gibraltar, where a few weeks later his identity was discovered, and he was brought to trial, and hanged. The story of his life is told in the *Military Sketch Book*, and the author of the account, who saw the wretch executed, says he died truly repentant, but without fear.

A like villain to De Soto was an American, Charles Gibbs, who first went to sea in the American sloop *Hornet*, and was in the engagement in which she captured the English sloop of war *Peacock*. Then he joined the *Chesapeake*, and when that ship was captured by the *Shannon*, was brought a prisoner of war to England, and confined in Dartmoor Prison until exchanged. Then he set up a low tavern in Boston, until, having drunk and gambled his money away, he again went to sea in the *John of Buenos Ayres*. The crew of

this vessel mutinied, carried her to the West Indies, and set up in those waters as pirates, making prizes of many small vessels until they acquired a regular fleet.

A British sloop of war destroyed the stronghold of these miscreants at Havana, when it was found that they had murdered the crews of the vessels they had captured, and it was proved that 150 persons at least had so lost their lives. The pirates escaped to the mountains, Gibbs eventually making his way back to Boston, and thence to Liverpool, where he lived for some time a dissipated life on the proceeds of his piracy. In 1826 he went back to the United States, and there succeeded in joining the Buenos Ayres rebels. In November 1830 he shipped at New Orleans in the brig *Vineyard*, and hearing there was money on board, he induced some of the crew to join him in murdering the master and the mate of the vessel, and taking possession of her. After this, certain of the crew who had taken no part in the crime were compelled by the pirates to navigate the vessel to Long Island, where, one rascal informing on another, the arrest of the murderers soon followed, and Gibbs and another ringleader were taken to New York, tried for murder, and, in April 1831, were hanged.

In the first half of the century, vessels navigating the Mediterranean and Grecian seas were in frequent danger from Greek pirates; and the files of the *Times*, fifty years ago, contain many reports of vessels attacked by them. In 1843 H.M.S. *Locust* made an unsuccessful search for a reported pirate schooner, that had actually been seen to attack a small brig off Malaga. The schooner was laid alongside the merchantman, and thirty armed Greeks boarded her. A little while later

the brig was scuttled, and nothing more was heard of her crew. The newspapers of 1844 report nine cases of piracy within as many months, in Greek waters; in each instance the vessels were scuttled and nearly all on board murdered; in one case shocking atrocities were committed upon a girl who was taken away by the pirate schooner, and was afterwards thrown overboard. In the same year the *Times* reported that "Letters from Athens announce that some pirate boats in the Channel of Andros had captured two merchant vessels—one a royal cutter with four men and carrying 16,000 drachmas belonging to the Greek Government—and put their crews to death. The headless bodies of twenty of the pirates' victims were washed ashore on the coast of Andros."

This is just the sort of rascality practised, even at the present day, by Chinese pirates; and ships in some of the rivers are never safe from attacks of the kind. In July 1899, for example, the Portugese steamer *Taiping*, on a voyage from Macao to Samohui, was coming down the west river and was attacked by a gang of pirates, who ran alongside her in a steam launch! The pirates opened fire on the steamer with a nine-pounder gun and rifles, and then boarded, killing the purser, who seems to have been the one man who offered serious resistance. There were forty passengers on board, and these were robbed of everything they possessed of any value; but, except the purser, no one was injured. Before leaving the ship, the pirates damaged the engines, so that they should have time to make good their escape before the steamer could report the affair.

The *Taiping* was specially prepared against the usual form of attack by having iron rails fixed across

the gangway-ports, stairways, and so on, to prevent a sudden rush to the upper deck by pirates who had shipped as passengers—an old trick of the Chinese. This is a true story. Here is another from the *Shipping Gazette* and *Lloyd's List* of May 26, 1899:—"News has been received here (*i.e.*, San Francisco) that H.M.S. *Torch* on her way from Sydney to Samoa, destroyed a fleet of pirate sloops. (Signed) REUTER."

The people of H.M.S. *Torch* have not yet been able to account for this story, and it would be interesting to know how the yarn originated. There is as much chance of speaking the *Flying Dutchman* as of falling in with pirates between Sydney and Samoa, and the regular old-fashioned pirates have, nowadays, no more chance against steamers than have highwaymen against locomotives, except in such instances as occur on the Chinese rivers, where reasonable precaution, such as a half-a-dozen rifles in the hands of as many resolute men, would settle the business of most Chinese pirates.

The great mutinies at Spithead and the Nore did not end the record of mutinies on men-o'-war. The class of men recruited in war time led to many desperate attempts at mutiny on King's ships, but since the long peace we have been saved this disgrace. Occasionally Jack will make a protest, such as throwing his mess-traps or the gun-sights overboard, for some real or imaginary injustice, and when we read of this in the newspapers, it can be pretty well taken for granted that injudicious officers, or even one officer who does not "play the game fairly," is at the bottom of the trouble. One of the most serious mutinies occurred in Bantry Bay, on board the *Temeraire*, in December 1801. Fourteen seamen were tried and five executed for an attempt to

take the ship, which was overcome by the resolution of the officers. In November of the following year, the men of the *Gibraltar*, an 84-gun ship, took her from the officers on the passage to Malta. The *Gibraltar* was in company with a squadron of three other vessels, and when the mutineers captured the ship they ran her under the sterns of the others, cheering and calling upon the crews of the squadron to join them. But they received no support, and, meanwhile, the officers, being backed by the loyalty of the marines, soon regained possession of their ship, and the ringleaders of the mutiny were soon afterwards hanged at Gibraltar. In the same year the crew of the *Hermione* murdered some of their officers, and took the ship into La Guaira; but she was afterwards retaken and the murderers hanged.

In 1800 the crew of the *Danæ* rose suddenly on their officers and carried the ship into Brest, where the French treated them as they deserved, exchanging the officers and those of the men who had remained loyal to our flag, and handing the mutineers over to the English Government. The ringleader of this affair was a man named Jackson, who had been secretary to Parker, the head of the 1797 mutiny. Jackson and most of the gang were afterwards hanged.

In the merchant service men often refuse duty, and, in consequence, are sent to gaol on the arrival of their ship in port, but beyond this offence there have been very few serious crimes of the kind, and those that have occurred have invariably been committed by foreigners. It is well to remember this, now that the British merchant service is to such a great extent manned by foreigners.

The three worst mutinies in the merchant service were those of the *Lennie*, the *Flowery Land*, and the

Caswell. The *Flowery Land*, in 1863, was bound from London to Singapore, and, on September 10, seven foreigners, who formed part of the crew, suddenly attacked the officers, murdering the captain, his brother, the mate, the Chinese steward, and the Chinese cook. The mutineers surprised the mate at daybreak, battering his brains out with a handspike, then throwing him overboard. The captain and his brother, hearing the disturbance, ran on deck and were stabbed to death. The second mate was then compelled to navigate the ship to the Brazilian coast, where she was scuttled, and the cook and the steward drowned in her. The mutineers, taking the second mate with them, landed in the boat; then the officer managed to communicate with the authorities, and the mutineers were arrested, sent to England, and five of them were hanged.

Seamen of the Latin races, known to English sailors as Dagos, have been the criminals in every case of serious mutiny in the merchant service during the present century. In 1830 the *Vittoria* shipped half-a-dozen Spaniards at the Philippines, for the passage home to London. A few days after leaving Manila, the Spaniards suddenly attacked their shipmates in the forecastle, stabbing three Englishmen, then they went aft and killed the captain, the second mate, and the carpenter, but spared the chief mate and the steward. After throwing the bodies overboard the mutineers compelled the mate to navigate the ship to the Californian coast; but the mate and the steward watched their opportunity, and the mutineers a week later, having got drunk, were attacked, three or four of them killed, the rest secured, and the ship retaken, and sailed into port, in due course, by the aid

of two or three English among the crew, who had been kept prisoners by the mutineers and were released by the mate and his party. The Spaniards were in due course hanged, as were seven others who, in the same year, mutinied on a Liverpool schooner bound home from the same port, and luckily fallen in with by a British man-o'-war, just after the mutineers had murdered the only three Englishmen on board of her. One of the Spaniards betrayed his fellows, and so the crime was discovered.

The *Lennie* was a Nova Scotia ship, and she sailed from Antwerp on October 22, 1875. Her captain was a Canadian named Hatfield; the mate, Wortley, and the second mate, Macdonald, were both Englishmen; the steward, Van Hoydek, was a Belgian, and the cabin boy, Henry Trusillo, was a fellow-countryman and relation of the steward. Besides these men there were eleven seamen, ten Greeks and one Frenchman, a notorious ruffian. At four o'clock in the morning, when the ship had been five days at sea and was in the Bay of Biscay, the steward was disturbed in his sleep by a great noise on deck. He ran to the companion, but found it fastened, then through the closed doors he heard five shots fired, and noises as of men falling from aloft, then he heard groans and cries of murder, these terrifying sounds lasting for more than an hour.

Then the hatch was opened, and some of the Greek seamen entered the cabin. One of them said to the steward, "Well, we are finished now, and you can take charge of the ship."

"Very well," answered Van Hoydek, "where do you wish to go, and what have you finished?"

"To Greece; but take the ship to Gibraltar, and we'll find our way from there. The captain and both mates are dead."

The steward promised to do this, but set a course for the English Channel, and so steered for several hours, when one of the mutineers discovered his intention, and he was solemnly warned that he would be killed if he deviated from his orders. Meanwhile the mutineers had thrown overboard the bodies of the two mates and the captain; one of the officers had run up the rigging to escape, but had been shot dead before he could mount half-a-dozen ratlines. After cleaning away the horrible traces of their crime, the murderers rigged a stage over the stern and cut out the ship's name; they then broke into the sea-chests of their victims, and dressed themselves in the dead men's clothes.

Again the steward attempted to head the ship for the Channel, and again he was suspected, and the mutineers seriously discussed whether they should kill him, but he with great coolness told them if they thought they knew more navigation than he did, to navigate the ship for themselves. One of the Greeks then took charge for two days, and the steward was sent below.

In the cabin he found the boy and said to him, "Now look here, Harry, if we take these fellows to where they want to go, there is no knowing what they may do. When they know where they are, they will be very likely to murder us and throw us over too. Let us try to save the ship and our own lives as well. Now, can I trust you?" "Yes, all right," replied the boy. "Well, then," said the steward, "now you

go down into the cabin and I will lock you in. Then you write twenty-four notes in French and in English, stating that the captain and officers on board of the *Lennie* are all murdered, and that the crew have seized the ship, and that we two are waiting assistance. While you are doing that I will go and get twenty-four empty bottles to put them in, and then we'll throw them overboard, and see what they send us."

The boy did as he was told, and when everything was ready, the steward again altered the course of the vessel towards the French coast, and arriving there on the 8th of November, he threw the bottles over, hoping that they would drift towards the coast, or that they might attract the attention of the French authorities. The weather became very rough, and the steward told the men that it would be no use for them to go to sea to lose their sails, and if they chose to go on shore, he would put them near land at a small place he knew of where there were no police. Six of the mutineers, approving of this suggestion, took one of the ship's boats and landed at Les Sables d'Olonne. The steward, by this strategy having got rid of six of the most dangerous, lay for two days near the coast.

In the meantime, some of the bottles had been picked up, and two days afterwards a pilot boat came alongside, followed by the *Travailleur*, a French man-o'-war. The assistance had promptly been sent by the French Government. Van Hoydek, the steward, and the boy Harry Trusillo now came forward, and, claiming the immediate protection of the French authorities, at once told the whole story of the mutiny. The remaining five of the mutineers who were on board were charged with complicity in the murder, arrested, and

placed in irons, and taken on shore by the *Travailleur*. In the meantime the news of the occurrence was privately communicated to the French gendarmes.

While all this had been going on, the six who had landed at Sables d'Olonne had attracted the attention of the French police there, they having with them their officers' clothes and other things they had seized to sell. Eventually they applied to the Commissioners of Marine, represented themselves as being destitute, and as having belonged to the Greek brigantine *St Georges*, which had foundered with all hands but themselves. By this time the news of the murder had spread through the French provinces, and being suspected, the six rascals were soon arrested. The whole of the eleven having undergone a preliminary examination in a French court, were sent to England. Two of them turned Queen's evidence, and four were convicted and hanged in Newgate.

Mr F. J. Dunn, one of the crew of the *Caswell*, now living in Sydney, New South Wales, retains a remarkably vivid recollection of the terrible experience he went through on that ship in 1875. I have compared the story as related by him to me in 1899, with the evidence given at the trial of the mutineers, and there is no material difference in it. Mr Dunn is probably now the only survivor of that affair whose whereabouts can be ascertained. Dunn left London for Buenos Ayres in March 1875, and on arrival at that port, his ship was condemned as unseaworthy, and so he joined the *Caswell*, which was then on the eve of sailing for Valparaiso to load for England. In due course the vessel arrived at her port of loading, nothing eventful happening on the passage, then she sailed for Queenstown on New

Year's Day 1876. The crew was made up of the captain, mate, second mate, carpenter, two apprentices, two able seamen, Carrick and Dunn, all English or Scotsmen, a negro steward, three Greek and two Italian seamen. The evening of the ship's sailing, "Big George," a powerful Greek, was insubordinate, and three days later, at eight on a Tuesday morning, just as the wheel was being relieved, Mr Dunn describes what follows:—
"I was getting the gear to ratline down the fore-rigging, when I heard a cry and the report of a shot. On turning round and looking aft, I saw the captain and 'Big George' on the main deck close to the ship's side, while George was repeatedly stabbing him with his sheath-knife; Joseph Pistolo had left the wheel, and was standing at the end of the quarter-deck with a revolver in his hand. The chief mate, on hearing the cry from the captain, started to run aft to his assistance, but on passing the galley door, the Greek cook ran out of the galley, and forcing the mate against the rail of the ship, plunged a large knife into his breast twice. The mate fell without a struggle. The captain was lying under the main rigging with a revolver shot in his forehead, and terribly wounded by knife stabs. On the second mate seeing what was happening (he was aloft at the time) he ran down, and started to go aft, crying, 'Put the ship back, men, and stop this.' He was met by Gaspar Pistolo, who shot him in the arm, and Christopher Bambos stabbed him in the back. He ran from them and came where I was standing amidships, holding his arm. He seemed to have completely lost his head, and was crying like a child. I took off my neck handkerchief and started to bind up his arm. The whole of the Greeks had gone on the quarter-deck by

this time. The steward being in the cabin had not heard any of the trouble ; so Joseph Pistolo called down the companion to the steward that the captain wanted him. On the steward coming up, 'Big George' seized him by the hair, and fairly hacked him to pieces, all of them taking part in it. 'Big George' then, with a cry of 'Maclean, Maclean,' together with some words in their own language, rushed off the poop on to the main deck towards Maclean. On seeing them coming Maclean rushed forward, while I ran up the fore-rigging, Gaspar and Joseph Pistolo firing at him as he ran. On getting a few yards abaft the body of the skipper Maclean fell, and George and the cook finished him with their knives. They then started to look for M'Gregor, the carpenter, who had shut himself up in the deckhouse, but they could not force open the door. On Joseph Pistolo saying something to them in their own language, they stopped trying to force it, and Joseph Pistolo called to him that they would do him no harm if he would come out. They put their knives up, and walked aft to the quarter-deck. The carpenter, on their going aft, came out, where I joined him, having come down from the foretop.

"The two apprentices were just turned fourteen years of age ; it was their first voyage, and they had gone down the forepeak at the commencement of the trouble, while Carrick, the other AB., had shut himself up in the forecastle. The whole of the affair did not last ten minutes from start to finish. On seeing us two together —that is myself and the carpenter—J. Pistolo came to us and said, 'Well, carpenter, you see what has happened. The skipper said he would do for us before he got home, but his turn has come first. I am sorry that Maclean got in our way, for he was not a bad man. I have had a

job to get George to spare the rest of you, as he says dead men tell no tales, but I think there has been enough bloodshed, so does my brother Gaspar. If you will kneel down and swear to help us take the ship where we intend to leave her, we won't interfere with you.' There being nothing else for it, the carpenter and I did so. Joseph then told me to go to the wheel, as the ship was without a helmsman since Joseph had left it to attack the captain. They then threw overboard the dead and washed the decks. Joseph Pistolo took command, while the cook navigated, Joseph not understanding navigation. All of them took up their quarters in the cabin, taking the carpenter's tools from him, and everything they thought would serve us as weapons. They let Carrick and me come aft and take our turns at the wheel, Carrick steering her one watch and me the other, the rest of them attending to the trimming of the sails when they required it. They made the carpenter do the cooking, and they did not trouble the boys. They were too young, I suppose. This state of affairs went on for five or six weeks. We had rounded the Horn, and were off the South American coast. We noticed they did not agree very well together. Joseph and his brother did not seem to be on very friendly terms with the other three, while 'Big George' took every opportunity to provoke us to give him and his mates, Bambos and the ex-cook, a chance to put us out of the way. They being well armed with revolvers, and knives stuck in their sashes, and not allowing us to come on the quarter-deck, we had no chance at all.

"Joseph Pistolo came forward in the forecastle one day, and told us himself and brother intended to take a boat and leave us, and that we must do the best for our-

selves, as he and his brother had prevented us from being killed up to then, the other three being of the opinion that while we were alive they would not be safe, but with us dead, they could scuttle the ship and go on shore where they liked, saying they intended to take the ship to some island in the Mediterranean, where George thought they could land without any trouble, first getting rid of us and the ship. Joseph finished up by saying, 'Now, boys, mind I am telling you when we are gone your lives are in your own hands, for you will never leave the ship alive if you don't get the best of them.' We thanked him, and the next day Joseph and his brother left, taking with them their share of the cabin plunder. George took charge of one watch with me and the carpenter—me at the wheel, and the carpenter on the main deck with one of the boys ; while Bambos and the ex-cook took the other watch, with Carrick to steer, but not allowing us to come off the main deck for anything ; while they did nothing but try to get us to do something for an excuse to murder us, throwing boiling tea over us when we were getting our meals, also scalding rice. At last M'Gregor, Carrick, and myself managed to get together without them seeing us, and we determined to end it one way or the other. 'Big George' told me and the carpenter that he would send us to look for the captain before the morning. He could speak a little broken English. It was on a Saturday, and the only chance we had was in the middle watch. It was a fine night. I was at the wheel. 'Big George' was walking the weather side of the quarter-deck. Bambos and the ex-cook were asleep in the cabin. It was their watch below. We had arranged a plan between us—Carrick, M'Gregor, and myself. 'Big George' would get tired of

walking about the whole of the watch ; he would lean over the weather rail sometimes for ten minutes or so. If we could only get within striking distance of him we should be right. He being well armed and always on the watch, it would have been all wrong should he have seen us coming. I had secured a heavy soldering iron a few days before, while the carpenter had got hold of a short axe that was left in the galley.

"About 2.30 A.M. I noticed George leaning over the weather rail. I gave the signal to the carpenter, who was watching on the main deck as near aft as he could get. I took the soldering iron from the leg of my trousers, where I had it concealed from the time I went to the wheel, let go the wheel, and rushed at George, hitting him over the head, and as he turned, the carpenter gave him another blow with the axe that settled him ; but he had alarmed the other two in the cabin. We left him and jumped down in the cabin. As we entered, the cook fired a shot at us, but it missed, and went through the deck. After a bit of a rough-and-tumble for five minutes or so—Carrick coming to our assistance—we got the best of them, the cook being killed and Bambos wounded. On reaching the deck we found 'Big George' dead. We put them over the side, and next saw to Christopher Bambos' wounds, and confined him in a cabin until we arrived at Queenstown, where he was tried and hanged. Joseph Pistolo was arrested at Monte Video two years after, and shared the same fate. Carrick, M'Gregor, and myself sailed the ship home, Carrick navigating. We passed a ship on the Equator and told them of the affair. They reported us on arrival, so it was known a fortnight before we got to Queenstown. On arrival off the Irish coast, H.M.S. *Goshawk* was on

the look-out for us, and put an officer and crew on board, and our troubles were at an end. The underwriters and owners recompensed us for bringing the ship home."

The *Caswell* had an unfortunate history : the mutiny occurred on her first voyage ; a few years later she was nearly lost on a lee shore ; and in 1899 she sailed from Newcastle, New South Wales, for Guayaquil with a cargo of coal, and was never afterwards heard of.

One of the most extraordinary stories of this kind is that of the ship *Tory*. She arrived in the West India Docks from Hong-Kong in November 1845, when the Thames police arrested sixteen of her crew, one of them badly cut about the head, and took a seventeenth under arrest to the hospital, he having been shot in the leg by the master of the ship, George Johnson, who appeared at the police court to charge the crew with mutiny and murder. The ship was a vessel of 608 tons, owned by Duncan of Liverpool, and she brought a cargo worth £30,000 in tea and silks, besides several passengers, among them some women ; her crew consisted of twenty-six men and boys. The master on his arrival reported that the second mate had jumped overboard, and the first mate had been murdered, that the crew had conspired together to take his life and run away with the ship, and that it was only by the free use of firearms and cutlasses, which accounted for the wounded men, that he preserved the command. Before the case had been long under inquiry, the evidence of the passengers and the statements of the crew put an entirely different complexion upon it, and the crew were taken out of the prisoner's dock, the master put in their place, and he was ultimately committed for trial for murder. When nearing St

Helena the provisions had run very low, and the whole crew were put on short allowances, the captain announcing that he intended to call at St Helena for stores ; but he passed this island, and when remonstrated with, said he had made up his mind to go on to Ascension, but, instead of doing so, kept on his course ; then, a few days later—partially, it was alleged, through drink—he went mad, and attacked his officers and men, indiscriminately slashing and stabbing some with cutlasses, and wounding others with firearms, driving one officer overboard at the point of a bayonet. On one occasion, he sent for three men to his cabin, receiving them there one at a time, and then attacking them with such ferocity that a beam running across the cabin ceiling was cut several inches deep by the force of the blows from his cutlass. Johnson was found not guilty on the ground of insanity.

I do not think the story of the *Indefatigable* mutiny has been printed in any book. This vessel was on a voyage from Chili to Sydney with a cargo of wheat. On July 22, 1828, she was three or four days' sail from the Low Archipelago. Loftgreen, the mate, had the middle watch, and on the forecastle Antonio Mancillo kept the look-out. The vessel a few years before this time had been a crack Australian trader ; she was then called the *Calder*, and was commanded by Dillon, the man who afterwards solved the La Perouse mystery ; she was, on this voyage, the property of a Mr John Duncan of Valparaiso, and six of her crew were Chilians, picked up at the last moment before sailing. The master, Joseph Hunter, and the mates had had frequent cause to speak sharply to the Chilians, who were both lazy and incompetent ; but there was no suspicion in

the minds of the Englishmen that any dangerous disaffection existed. It was a clear starlight night, with only just enough wind to keep the sails from flapping, and the mate, as he walked the short poop, had all he could do to keep awake; suddenly the look-out man cried in broken English that there was an island right ahead—"Come forward, sir, and look!"

The mate ran forward to the forecastle, and just as he reached it two men dashed out and pinioned his arms, while Mancillo held the point of a knife to his throat, whispering in his ear, the while, that if he uttered a word he was a dead man. But Loftgreen struggled desperately, and, without heeding the threats, cried murder several times. In the scuffle the mutineers dropped their knives, and when for a moment they relaxed their hold and stooped to pick them up, Loftgreen managed to shake them off and run aft; then he found that he had been stabbed several times in the right arm and was bleeding profusely, but he reached his cabin, took a pair of pistols from his bunk, and crying loudly for help, prepared to fight the mutineers.

Meanwhile the noise first awakened the steward, who, as he came hurrying up the companion, was met by a Chilian, who struck him over the shoulder with a cutlass, and he fell severely wounded at the foot of the ladder. Captain Hunter, armed with pistols and cutlass, hearing the mate's cries, opened his cabin door just as some of the mutineers reached it. Then the skipper, in his excitement taking no aim, fired both pistols, hitting no one, but for some minutes he fought desperately with his cutlass, then, covered with wounds, fell dead.

Another party of the Chilians had during this time attacked Loftgreen, who had been joined by the second mate, and who fought well, but they were soon over-powered, ironed, and, with the steward, lashed to stanchions.

Before the mutineers began their work, they had battened down the fore-scuttle, confining the carpenter, the cook, and the three other seamen, so that the vessel was now in possession of the Chilians. Having thrown the body of the captain overboard, the mutineers broke open the spirit room and drank freely, but kept sober enough to set a guard over their prisoners, and to steer the ship and trim the sails. The next morning they had a consultation, and, as a result, hove the ship to, and hoisted out a boat, storing it with a couple of breakers of water, a bag of biscuits, and some salt meat.

Loftgreen was then sent for, and ordered to draw a rough chart, showing the course and distance to the nearest land, Mancillo standing over him with a loaded pistol the while. The mate remonstrated, saying that the nearest land was a cannibal island, and was answered, "so much the better."

Loftgreen, notwithstanding that he was wounded and very much agitated, remembered that the mutineers could not in all probability read English. "Mancillo," said he, "see I have drawn a chart of this savage island, and written on the back of it the course and distance. I have also warned them to look out for the natives, they are cannibals ; you do not object to this, I hope."

Mancillo looked critically at the writing, and then said, "We are not murderers, and do not object if the words are as you say."

But Loftgreen had really drawn a chart showing the course and distance to Tahiti, and the words he had written were, "Coast all the islands, they are dangerous; land nowhere till you reach Tahiti. Don't show this to any one; I am forced to take the ship to Manila, but will try to retake her; I think I can gain over Jose and the cook."

Loftgreen was then put in irons, and one of the mutineers kept guard over him, while the others lowered a boat, and forced Todd, the second mate, the carpenter, the steward, and a Swedish seaman into her. Then Mancillo handed the second mate a compass and said: "We give you a fine chart made by the mate, who has written sailing directions. We do not wish to injure you."

Todd looked at the writing and adroitly replied that there was mighty little chance of escaping the savages with such means; then the boat was cut adrift, the mutineers ran up the Chilian flag and flung jeers at the castaways as the boat dropped astern, crying to them to keep in condition, as cannibals liked plump men. Poor Todd, though the nearest land was 600 miles away, kept his heart up. "Better the open sea," he said, "than the brig and these cut-throats." Then he took the tiller, the three others hoisted the sail, and the boat was headed due west, which, according to the mate's chart, would bring them to the eastermost of the Paumotus.

They had enough biscuits, raw meat, and water to last them with great economy for three weeks, their boat was a good one, they were provided with a compass, and the course to be steered; the men were on good terms with each other and submissive to their officer,

so that they had much to be thankful for, and their chief sorrow on leaving the ship was their fear for the safety of Loftgreen.

On August 7—after fifteen days in the open boat—they made Resolution Island, almost the centre of the Paumotu Archipelago, having passed, without sighting them, several islands which lie further to the East. To their joy, on reaching Resolution Island the natives put off in canoes and treated them with great kindness, so that they were induced to land, staying a day and a night, and receiving a stock of cocoanuts and fresh water. Then they continued on their course, encountering a severe gale in which they lost their rudder and were nearly swamped, and the compass was so badly damaged as to be rendered useless. Fortunately they soon made Tahiti, after having been altogether twenty-four days in the boat. Here, to their surprise, instead of being received cordially, they were instantly made prisoners. Luckily, an American whaler happened to be lying in the port, and her master, seeing the commotion from the deck of his ship, landed to inquire the cause; explanations followed, and the castaways were then treated with every kindness. It appeared that a party of runaway convicts had called at the island a few days before in a ship's longboat; they had stolen a missionary's whaler that had been lying in the harbour and put to sea in her. Canoes gave chase, the convicts fired upon the Tahitians, killing some of them. The natives at first thought that Todd and his companions were another party of similar rascals. The castaways, after a short stay at Tahiti, were taken on board the whale ship *Tiger* and

conveyed in her to Sydney, where they told their story.

Meanwhile, as soon as the boat was clear of the brig, Loftgreen was sent for and ordered to navigate the vessel to Guam, one of the Ladrone Islands. The voyage, thus began, lasted from the 22nd July till the 12th December. Fine calm weather prevailed the whole time, and it was fortunate that it was so, for the mutineers would only furl or trim the sails just when the humour took them, and four out of the six rascals were drunk during the whole time. The four drunkards soon took it into their heads that it was necessary for their safety that Loftgreen should be murdered ; but the two sober men, knowing the need of his navigation, defended him ; and as the mate was taking his observations with the sextant every day, he heard the discussion as to when and how he should be killed. The mutineers seemed to have no idea that the Ladrones were at all civilised, and were under the impression that on arrival there they could sell the ship to the natives.

In due course they sighted Guam, and as the ship sailed into the harbour, the mutineers remarked to one another that the buildings looked as if there were Europeans living there, but they supposed it would be all right. The ship's anchor was let go and a boat lowered ; Mancillo and another man got in her and pulled ashore to strike a bargain, when they were surprised to find themselves taken in charge by an Alcade and a guard of Spanish soldiers. The officers closely questioned them, and not considering their answer satisfactory, he put them in a boat, and with a guard rowed off to the ship.

The men on the brig, seeing the boat approach with a party of soldiers in it, concluded that their comrades had betrayed them, and they ran below to hide themselves, leaving Loftgreen on deck to receive the Alcade, who was soon in possession of the whole story. Thereupon the brig was seized and every one on board taken to a guard-house. Next day the Spanish governor heard the mate's evidence, and believing it, the mutineers were placed in irons, and Loftgreen treated with every kindness. Soon afterwards H.M.S. *Rainbow*, then commanded by Captain Rous (afterwards the famous racing admiral), entered the port, and she took Loftgreen and the mutineers to Manila, where, after trial before a Spanish court, the murderers were hanged, the *Indefatigable* condemned as a prize to the Government, and Loftgreen sent to Sydney.

The gold robbery business is managed now with considerable skill. In recent years it has been nothing uncommon for a mail steamer from Australia, on arrival at her destination, to find the specie room short of a box or two of gold ; and no trace is ever afterwards found of the thieves. They went at it in rougher fashion fifty years ago ; the *Nelson* gold robbery is an example.

The *Nelson*, a sailing ship, in 1852, was lying at anchor in Hobson's Bay the night before sailing for England, with an amount of gold bullion on board to the value of £25,000. On the evening of April 2 the captain was on shore at the agent's office, and the officers and crew, with the exception of the mate, three seamen, and a boy, were on shore for the night. At midnight, two boats containing twenty-two persons,

some of them dressed as women, pulled quietly alongside the ship. These people gained the main deck and the forecastle without waking any one ; then suddenly seized the three seamen and the boys, and securely lashed and gagged them, threatening instant death if they made a cry ; meanwhile another party went aft to where the mate and the carpenter were sleeping, and attacked them in like manner. The mate fought desperately, but was shot in the thigh by one of his assailants, and ultimately secured. Then the robbers proceeded to the storeroom, and deliberately hoisted up the twenty-three boxes of gold it contained, and lowered them into the boats. The thieves then carefully threw overboard everything that could be used as a weapon, and carried all the prisoners into the storeroom, closing and battening the hatch upon them, then they got into their boats and rowed away. During these proceedings, one of the crew had been sleeping on deck, and had been overlooked by the thieves, and he, waking and seeing what was going on, hid himself until the thieves had cleared out, then he released the prisoners from the storeroom, and the mate, wounded as he was, lowered a boat and rowed ashore to alarm the authorities. Water police and harbour master's boats were sent in search, but no trace was discovered until daylight, when on the shores of the bay, half-a-dozen miles away, an abandoned boat was seen, and on the sand were the wheel tracks of a waggon. What became of the gold has never been discovered ; but, subsequently, four men were arrested, and three of them convicted, the crew swearing to them as having taken part in the crime ; and a Melbourne storekeeper is alleged to have bought the gold at

thirty shillings an ounce, and afterwards to have left for England.

In 1856, the *Strebon Heath*, a sailing ship, was carrying about £250,000 worth of bullion to England, and soon after leaving England, a man named William Lewis unfolded to other members of the crew a plot he had arranged, to take the ship and carry her to the South American coast. For his purpose he, after swearing some of the men to secrecy, showed them a supply of firearms and daggers he had stowed in his bunk, and a couple of bottles of laudanum with which he proposed to doctor the soup for the cabin dinner, and poison the twenty-two passengers on board. Fortunately the other seamen were honest fellows, and they reported the whole affair to the captain, who promptly put Lewis in irons and carried him thus to London, where he was tried at the Central Criminal Court and sentenced to transportation for life.

Broaching cargo is another form of sea crime carried on to this day. Some years ago I was on board of a ship carrying a valuable general cargo, in which the steerage passengers and one watch of the crew combined to steal property worth altogether about £800. The business was carried on so well that it was not suspected until the ship was nearly at her destination. As soon as this watch came on deck at night, certain of the men were told off to keep guard, while others who had in some way secured the keys of the locked fore-hatch, went below and rummaged the cargo, emptying case after case of jewellery, beer, spirits, drapery, cutlery, and preserved foods, such as pickles, jams, condensed milk, and similar articles. The extraordinary part of the affair was the fact that the officer in charge of the

watch never appears to have had the slightest idea of what his men were doing, and none of the men were tempted to get drunk, notwithstanding the quantity of liquor that was among the goods stolen. There is no doubt the steerage passengers had a hand in the business, for many of them were afterwards seen on shore wearing clothing known to have been in the cargo, but the police could not obtain evidence enough to convict them. The thieves burrowed like rabbits into the ship's hold, leaving the top of the cargo undisturbed, so that when, occasionally, the hatch was opened there were no traces of anything unusual.

On arrival in port, the ship, having about fifty tons of explosives on board, was anchored some distance below the usual anchorage to discharge the dangerous part of her cargo. The place was at that time a quiet little sleepy hollow, and a glimmering of suspicion having got into the captain's head that something was wrong, when the pilot left the ship late in the evening he was told to send the police boat to her as soon as possible. The police boat duly came the following morning at about seven o'clock and found the officers asleep in their beds, and the whole crew, including the anchor watch, missing. They had made a raft during the night of odd planks, and thus got on shore, and not one of them was ever afterwards heard of. When what remained of the ship's cargo was discharging, it was seen what a remarkable escape from disaster those on board of her had experienced. The thieves had so burrowed in the hold that if we had come in for any serious rolling, the heavy cargo would have shifted and capsized the ship—but this was not the worst. The magazine, as it was called, was merely a deal plank

compartment in the hold amidships, and in this the fifty tons of powder and fireworks were stowed in kegs and wooden cases. The bulkhead of this compartment was covered with candle-grease, and burnt black in several places where the thieves had stuck candles to light them at their work.

CHAPTER XII

THE SOUTH SEAS

How the Islands were Populated—Castaways among the Blacks—
True Stories of Strange Adventures.

WHEN the century opened, the story of the South Seas could be told in a chapter. An Englishman's knowledge of the Pacific for generations later can be summed up in the phrase that it was dotted with coral reefs, peopled by savages, and ruled by the "King of the Cannibal Islands." But the long peace drove adventurers, men who if they had lived a century earlier would have been buccaneers, out of civilised waters. Steam made of ocean routes crowded highways of commerce, too well policed for any but respectable travellers to journey upon, and vagabond sea rovers, and men with a past to be buried, or with the love of adventure, abandoned the regular furrows of the propeller-ploughed Atlantic for the trackless wastes of the Pacific Ocean.

It was not until 1809, nearly twenty years after the mutiny of the *Bounty*, that the first news of the lost mutineers reached England, when Captain Folgar of the American ship *Topaz*, reported to Sir Sydney Smith at Rio de Janeiro his re-discovery of Pitcairn, peopled by a half-caste race of thirty-five persons and by one Englishman, calling himself Alex-

ander Smith, the only mutineer remaining alive. Six years longer elapsed before the English Government had a vessel in these seas, and Sir Thomas Staines, in H.M.S. *Briton*, sighted it by mere accident. "I fell in with an island where none is laid down on the charts," he writes to the Admiralty, being on his passage from the Marquesas to Valparaiso; "the island must undoubtedly be that called Pitcairn," he adds, and then relates his meeting with Smith, then calling himself Adams, and with Thursday October Christian, the son of the ringleader of the mutineers.

When the century opened, the only settlement in the South Pacific was the convict station at Sydney; the islands of New Zealand were still "savage;" the discovery that Tasmania was a separate island from the main Australian continent was a year old, and Flinders and Bass, the discoverers, had gone their several ways, and were within sight of their ending: Flinders upon the survey of the continent, which was to end in his shipwreck, followed by captivity, and soon after, in 1814, death; Bass in a trading voyage to the South Seas, there to go out of history, no man knows whither.*

Missionary work in the Pacific—if the planting of the cross by the Spaniards in the far north-west, in the Philippines and adjacent islands, be excepted—was still so much in its infancy that the account of the second voyage of the *Duff*, related in the *Journal of a Captured Missionary*, was only published in 1800, and the mission was then always described as to "cannibals," while dozens of islands, now well-known *copra* trading stations,

* Their romantic story is told in *The Naval Pioneers of Australia*: Louis Becke and Walter Jeffery (John Murray, London, 1899).

whence the native races have disappeared, were then undiscovered.

For nearly forty years the fate of La Perouse and his comrades remained a mystery. The French admiral in the *Astrolabe*, with the *Boussole* in company, in continuation of his voyage of discovery, left Botany Bay in 1788, just as the first fleet for the colonisation of New South Wales was leaving the bay for Port Jackson; and the English officers were the last Europeans to speak with the Frenchmen. In 1791 Captain Hunter, on his way from Sydney to England, reported that he had seen natives in canoes off the Admiralty Islands, dressed in portions of European clothing, and wearing French naval sword belts. In the same year Admiral D'Entrecasteaux was despatched by the French Government upon an expedition of discovery, with orders to search for traces of the missing ships—in the course of his voyage sighting, but not searching, the island of Vanikoro in the Santa Cruz group.

In 1813 the East India Company's ship *Hunter*, cruising in the South Seas, left two sailors, a Prussian and a lascar, upon the island of Tucopia in the Santa Cruz group. And, in 1826, Mr Peter Dillon, the officer in charge of the boat which had landed the seamen, being in command of a ship in this quarter of the world, determined to call at *Tucopia*, and see if his old shipmates were still alive. They were; and they informed him that on the neighbouring island of Vanikoro, so late as 1820, there were living two survivors of the La Perouse expedition, besides a great quantity of stores and wreckage from the ships.

Dillon was unable to make the island to satisfy himself of the truth of these statements, but he pre-

vailed upon the East India Company, upon his return, to send him in the *Research* to the island. He reached Vanikoro in September 1827, and there, though the two men were dead, he learned from the natives the solution of the mystery. The ships had been wrecked on Vanikoro reefs forty years before ; some of the crews had met their deaths by drowning or at the hands of the natives, others had built a brig from the timbers of the wrecks, and in her, with La Perouse, had sailed in search of help. The brig was never more heard of, and it was conjectured that she was wrecked at the Admiralty Isles, the relics seen by Captain Hunter in 1791 being those of her people.

Dumont D'Urville, in April 1826, was sent by the French Government, who had heard of Dillon's expedition, to join the search in a new *Astrolabe*, but he arrived after Dillon had completed his discovery. Dillon ruined himself in the enterprise, and the East India Company gave him nothing in return for the honour he had conferred upon it ; but France made him a Chevalier, and he died one of her most honoured men.

During the first half of the century the South Sea Islands were slowly populated by the "civilised" from three great sources : castaways, deserters from whalers and traders, and runaway convicts. This two-to-one proportion of rascals to unfortunates was not altogether counterbalanced by the small number of decent men who then settled in the islands, nor were the convicts in many cases a worse leaven than the deserters ; nor the castaways, in all instances, a better than the other two elements. Prisoners at the penal settlements often stowed away on board whalers, and notwithstanding the heavy penalties imposed for harbouring convicts

the masters of the ships were often short-handed, therefore glad to get these men, for there were many seamen among them, or at least a majority, with a knowledge picked up on the long sea voyage in the transport, that would serve their purpose. Such men when they got to sea, of course, pretty soon fell out with the master or the mates; then the "bolters," as the runaways were called, were either marooned, or deserted at the first island where the whaler, or the trader, stopped to wood and water. What fearful crimes, what horrible incidents, could be told and have been printed of these people! Many of the tragic stories of the South Seas told by Louis Becke are true.

On February 1, 1843, the *Giraffe*, bound from Sydney to Manila, was off Pleasant Island. It is only a dot on the largest map, lying to the west of the Gilbert group, close to the Equator, about twenty degrees to the eastward of New Guinea. Simpson, master of the *Giraffe*, reported that this island, like many others with which he was acquainted, was infested with a gang of rascals, comprising runaway convicts, time-expired men, or deserters from whalers. On his ship bringing-to off the island, she was boarded by George Lovett, who said he was a deserter from the *Offley*, whaler, of London. Lovett informed him that there were seven Europeans with him, all deserters. On January 31 one of these men shot another in a drunken quarrel; they manufactured the drink by distilling stuff from the cocoanut trees. Not long before this, several runaway convicts had landed there, among them a fellow who became known to posterity as "Monster Jones." In October 1841 there were eleven deserters and bolters on the island, and Jones decided that this was too many for

comfort, so he invited them all to a feast. The food had previously been prepared by him, and seven died poisoned ; the remaining four refused to eat, so, waiting opportunities of catching them alone, Jones shot them one at a time. After this the natives cut him, thinking he was dangerous even to them ; so he left in a whaler, and the last heard of him was that he had shipped at Guam on a vessel bound to England.

The capture of the *Cyprus* was adapted by Marcus Clarke for the main incident of *For the Term of His Natural Life*; the true story was little altered in the novel. In August 1829 the *Cyprus*, while lying in Recherche Bay, Tasmania, was captured by the thirty-one prisoners on board, led by a man named Swallow, who eighteen years before had cut out a schooner in Port Jackson, and was a man of considerable intelligence and great courage. The transport in which he had come out to Australia was caught in a hurricane and lay on her beam ends. The captain called for volunteers to cut away the masts. No man moved, the danger appalled them. Then Swallow stepped forward, saying that his life was of no value, pushed aside the captain who was himself about to undertake the dangerous task, and did what was necessary. For his conduct on that occasion, although he had made more than one attempt to escape, he had been treated with leniency. On board the *Cyprus* was Lieutenant Carew in charge of a guard of ten soldiers, Mrs Carew, and a child. Carew imprudently left the ship in a boat to go fishing, accompanied by a prisoner named Popjoy, the surgeon, the mate, and a soldier. Just after the boat was clear of the brig, the convicts, led by Swallow, suddenly rose upon the remainder of the guard.

The prisoners had been left without irons, and nine of them were allowed on deck for exercise with only two soldiers in charge. The vessel was taken without bloodshed, and, after a great deal of parleying, the mutineers set on shore the remainder of the guard, and thirteen prisoners who refused to join them, with Mrs Carew and her child. Altogether forty-five persons were landed, and a supply of food was given to them. They were upon a desolate coast, and during the thirteen days they remained, suffered great hardships. They constructed a coracle of wicker work from wattle branches covered with canvas, and in this frail barque two prisoners, Morgan and Popjoy, put to sea, happily meeting with a vessel in a neighbouring bay, 20 miles distant. Meanwhile, the mutineers carried the *Cyprus* to the Friendly Islands and thence to Japan, where seven of them left, and the rest took the brig to China. At Canton, having scuttled the vessel off the coast, they landed in the character of shipwrecked seamen in a boat with the name *Edward* painted on her stern ; their story was believed, and Swallow and three others were given a free passage to England. A few days after they sailed, a second boat came in, but the men in her had forgotten their parts, and gave wrong names and dates. The whole story was then suspected, and these men were arrested, sent to England as prisoners, and advice of the real character of Swallow was despatched home. Swallow, however, was clever enough to land at Margate, and escaped for the time, but on the ship entering the Thames his two companions were arrested, tried, and executed. Swallow was later on captured, and for want of evidence would have been acquitted, but Popjoy, who had meanwhile

been released in consequence of his good conduct, happened to be in the Thames Police Court under arrest for a trifling offence, and his evidence convicted Swallow as an escaped prisoner, but was not considered strong enough to justify hanging him, and he was sent out to Port Arthur, where he subsequently died.

Another case of the kind is that of the brig *Frederick*, seized in January 1834 at Macquarie Harbour. The ringleader, John Barker, understood navigation, and several of the prisoners were sailors by profession. After a very rough voyage of six weeks, they succeeded in making Valdivia in South America, where they scuttled the vessel, and landed and made a clean breast of their story to the governor, who received them kindly, and eventually they settled in the place, marrying and becoming decent citizens. Then H.M.S. *Blonde* put into the port; her captain discovered them, and demanded that they should be delivered to him. The governor refused to give them up, and the *Blonde* departed, returning later when a new governor had been appointed. This man put them under arrest while he was negotiating with the British officer, but Barker and three others, who had just built a boat for the use of the governor, managed to launch her and escape; the rest were put on board the English warship, taken to England, and again transported for life to Van Dieman's land, arriving there four years from the date of their escape. Barker and his companions were never afterwards heard of.

In another case, in 1833, an ex-lieutenant in the navy, named Darby, who had fought at Navarino, carried off a 25-ton schooner, the *Badger*, and in company with a convict clergyman and half-a-dozen

convict seamen, made good his escape, and there is reason to believe the whole party reached one of the South Sea Islands and lived out the remainder of their lives there.

These cases could be multiplied till the story of them filled a book, which would be in effect the biographies of a great many of the first colonists of the coral islands of the Pacific. Commodore Wilkes, in charge of the United States Exploring Expedition, the first and only American enterprise of the kind, relates his meetings at one of the islands of the Fiji group, in 1840, with Paddy Connel of County Clare. Connel had belonged to the army, and was in one of the regiments sent to oppose the French landing; but the regimental band, in an incautious moment, struck up a White Boy's tune, and Paddy deserted and joined the enemy. When Lord Cornwallis won his battle, Paddy was among the prisoners, and his accent showing he was not a Frenchman, he was mercifully not hanged, but transported. From New South Wales he managed, after getting a ticket of leave, to stow away on a ship bound to Tonga, where he arrived soon after the cutting off of the *Port au Prince* at that island. The ship then went to Fiji, and there Paddy left her, and when Wilkes met him he had been nearly forty years living with the natives—a man of good repute, the husband of a hundred wives, the father of forty-eight half castes. At the same island Commodore Wilkes met an Englishman, or what was once an Englishman, calling himself James Housman, who occupied the dignified position of cup-bearer to the King of Fiji.

Mr Becke, who knows the South Seas better than

most men, has well retold many old stories of the cutting off of traders in the islands. The adventures of Mariner, who was one of the crew of the *Port au Prince*, which was seized by the natives of Lefuka in the Friendly Islands in 1805, is an instance among many, and the cutting off of the *Boyd*, in 1809, is also an old story. The Maoris at Whangaroa, it will be remembered, murdered her European complement of some sixty persons, sparing only three, who were afterwards rescued with much difficulty and only by the exercise of great diplomacy. The timbers of the *Boyd* are still to be seen protruding from the harbour mud at low water.

In May 1826 the *La Fayette*, an American whaler, was in the Tongan group when some of her crew, while wooding and watering at a small island, met a Hawaiian native, who informed them he was one of the survivors of the *Port au Prince*. This man said that the *La Fayette* was the second vessel to visit the island; in the first that had called, about ten years before, there was a very big stout woman who had with her a little girl of about eight years of age. The woman told him she was an Englishwoman who had escaped from the Maoris. Description and date leave little doubt that this was a woman named Charlotte Badger, and here is her story: The *Venus*, a colonial brig, sailed from Sydney for Hobart in November 1800, having on board some male prisoners and two women. While at anchor in Twofold Bay *en route*, the captain being on shore, a quantity of rum was smuggled on board, and when the master returned to his ship he found all hands, from the mate down, drunk, and the two convict ladies entertaining them with a dance. After

some difficulty the master restored order, and proceeded to his destination. A few days later, while the ship was in a small bay near Hobart, Kelly the mate, and three others, assisted by the two women, suddenly rose on the crew, and with firearms drove them into the boat, cut her adrift, and sailed off with the brig. As soon as the alarm was given the vessel was chased; but nothing was heard of her for more than a year. Then it was reported in Sydney by the master of a vessel that he, while at the Bay of Islands, New Zealand, had met with traces of the *Venus*, and by degrees the rest of the story was unfolded. After committing all sorts of atrocities, the pirates made friends with the Maoris, burnt the ship, and went to live with them. In 1808 a British man-o'-war came across Kelly, captured him, and he was hanged in England; an American whaler met with another of the mutineers, and he came to the same end. All the others except Badger and her child were lost trace of, but Badger was met with in 1808, when she was offered a passage to Sydney, but declined it, saying she preferred to die with the Maoris; then no more was heard of her until the *La Fayette*, in 1826, arrived in Sydney with the report from Tonga.

In the year 1693 *The Adventures of Jaques Sadeur* was published, and a few months later an English translation was printed in England, entitled *A New Discovery of Terra Incognita—Australia or the Southern World*. This publication purported to be the story of a Frenchman who had been wrecked on the Great Southern Continent, and had spent thirty-five years among the savages. It was fictitious from beginning to end; among the adventures Sadeur relates is one in which he rode cross-

legged upon a dragon, mistaking, perhaps, a turtle for this creature! Sadeur seems to have written a couple of hundred years too soon ; he was disbelieved, and no learned societies or distinguished persons patronised him ; there was no enterprising magazine to give him bold advertisement.

It is curious how unlucky Frenchmen have been in the South Seas. There are plenty of very remarkable true stories of adventures of French castaways, and not the imagination of a Defoe, but the industry of a reader and compiler, is all that is required to construct thrilling narratives of shipwreck and strange adventures among blacks.

In 1858 Narcisse Pellatier sailed from Bordeaux as cabin boy on the *St Paul* of that port, bound to China, where she shipped 350 emigrants for Sydney. On the way to Sydney, the *St Paul* struck a reef on the Louisiade group of Islands, and became a wreck. All hands reached the shore in safety, but the savages showed signs of attacking them, and the Chinese emigrants were so frightened of the islanders that the Europeans saw that they would be of no use for defence. Thereupon the crew seized the best boat and left the island, in the hope of making the Australian coast. It was afterwards discovered that the Chinese were then seized and penned off in pairs by the savages, who deliberately fattened, then ate them ; one Chinaman was kept for some unknown reason, and he was afterwards rescued and told the story. Meanwhile the Europeans, after great suffering, reached the northern coast of Australia, near Cape Direction. The captain, seven seamen, and the boy Pellatier, were all that now remained alive of the European crew. These

persons landed and made a search for water, finding only enough to give some of them a sip. At the moment of discovering the water, a party of blacks was seen in the distance; the seamen ran to their boats, jumped in, and rowed away, leaving Pellatier lying exhausted on the ground. The boat ultimately reached New Caledonia and reported all that had happened, and that there was no doubt Pellatier had perished. In 1875 a pearlling vessel was lying under the lee of Night Island, within the Great Barrier Reef, and some of her crew made friends with the blacks on the shore of the mainland. Among these natives was one of lighter colour than the others, and the crew were informed "this fellow a white fellow." He was induced to come on board the schooner's boat, though not without difficulty, and as the boat pushed off from the beach, he seemed half inclined to spring overboard and rejoin the natives. Some incoherent French words escaped from his lips, and his affrighted eyes, as he glanced from one to the other of the boat's crew, showed that he was under strong excitement. As soon as he stood upon the schooner's deck, however, his alarm seemed to subside, and he tried to express his satisfaction at again being among white men, by gestures and other signs of approval. The schooner set sail for Somerset, on Cape York, which in those days was the headquarters of the Torres Strait pearlling fleet. As the little vessel made her way northward along the coast, the strange white man began to speak, and to eat his food like a Christian, losing his fear. A fortnight later he was able to tell his rescuers that his name was Narcisse Pellatier, that he was a Frenchman, and had been seventeen years living among the blacks. Pel-

latier, after his return to France, published a little book of his adventures, which seems to have gone out of print, and is now quite forgotten.

The ship *Charles Eaton* left Sydney in 1834, bound to Singapore. She struck a rock in Torres Straits, in the month of August, and the ship's complement, consisting of twenty-six men and six passengers, were compelled to take to the boats. Although there was no need for haste, the crew made a rush, and after swamping one boat, made off with the other. There were only five men in her, and they safely reached Timor. There remained on the wreck the captain, the surgeon, Captain D'Oyly of the Bengal Artillery, Mrs D'Oyly, two children and an ayah, the mate, and several seamen. These people set about building a raft, and when it was finished, all but the mate and the seamen pushed off from the wreck, leaving those on board to complete a second raft and follow.

Nothing more was heard of the *Charles Eaton* or her people until the New South Wales Government schooner *Isabella*, sent in search of them, found two survivors in July 1836. This was their story: A cabin boy named John Ireland was among those of the second raft party; he related how, when the first raft was out of sight, the second was launched, and after two days and nights upon it, in which the people were up to their middles in water, and without food, they fell in with a canoe containing ten natives. These people, by signs, invited the white men to leave their raft for the canoe, and this they did, and were presently landed upon a small island, afterwards discovered to be Boydan, not far from Cape Camisade on the Queensland coast. The exhausted castaways were just able to crawl on shore,

then as soon as they were landed, the savages set upon them and clubbed them all to death, except Ireland, who, for some unaccountable reason, was spared. A few days later the savages re-embarked in their canoe, taking Ireland with them. Presently they landed upon another island nearer to New Guinea, where Ireland saw one of Captain D'Oyly's children. This little fellow was just old enough to comprehend, and to explain what had happened to the party on the first raft. The child was the only survivor. The blacks were not cannibals, they seemed to kill for the mere lust of blood.

The two white boys remained with the natives on this island about two months, when the savages again took to their canoes and sailed to the northward. On their way they called at several places for food ; and, at last, at Murray's Island a native bought them from their captors for some bunches of bananas. This Murray Island black took the white boys home with him and treated them kindly for several months ; then, when the *Isabella* was making her search, he saw her, and putting off in his canoe, restored the children. The schooner, from the boys' description, was enabled to find the scenes of the murders of the rest of the *Charles Eaton's* people, and there discovered the bleached bones of the victims, brought them to Sydney, and they were interred in what is now an old disused graveyard.

A similarly horrible affair was that of the *Stirling Castle*, wrecked, in 1836, in Torres Straits. The survivors of that wreck were nearly six months among the blacks. Seven persons were recovered out of eighteen who got ashore from the wreck, and the tortures and deaths of the castaways is one of the most heartrending chapters in

the story of the South Seas. Mrs Fraser, the wife of the captain, was compelled by the blacks to climb trees for honey, the blacks forcing her to do this by applying firesticks to her person. She had witnessed her husband beaten to death because he was too exhausted to drag great branches of trees to which the blacks had harnessed him. One of the crew during their captivity managed to escape, and by singular good fortune to make his way to what was then the small penal settlement at Moreton Bay, and is now the Queensland capital, Brisbane. He brought help, and by good management and bribes, Mrs Fraser, the second mate, and five seamen were rescued from the blacks. Lieutenant Otter, who effected the rescue of Mrs Fraser, said: "The woman was a skeleton, the skin literally hanging upon her bones, whilst her legs were a mass of sores, where the savages had tortured her with firebrands. Notwithstanding her miserable plight, it was absolutely necessary for us to start homewards, though she had already come nine or ten miles, as there were about 300 natives in the camp, who would most likely attack us in the night, for many of them had been unwilling to give her up. Graham, our guide, had fortunately met with one of his former friends, a kind of chief, through whose influence he had succeeded. So treacherous are the natives that it is impossible to trust one of them for a moment. When we met her she had been two days without food, and had subsisted the most part of the time on a kind of fern root which is found in the swamps. Now and then she would get the tail or fin of a fish, when the savages had a superabundance, and this she was obliged to earn by dragging heavy logs of wood and fetching water. She was not allowed to enter their huts; but, naked as she

was, she was obliged to lie out the whole night, even in the heaviest rains. This is but a slight sketch of what she went through. When we had got about half-way to our boats, we were obliged to carry her in turn. We did not arrive until next morning, when she begged for hot water, as she was anxious to restore her face and person to their natural colour. The natives, in order to bring her as near as possible to their own complexion, had rubbed her skin every day with charcoal."

In 1823 four men in a little cutter left Sydney for Illawarra, fifty miles to the southward, to load cedar. When within sight of their destination they were caught by a heavy gale and driven to sea. They had no knowledge of navigation, and not even a compass, so that when the weather moderated they had not the least idea of their position; and the only man with any sea experience, after the boat had been drifting for a week, through drinking salt water, died, raving, in a few hours. For twenty-one days they drifted, living on a few biscuits and such water as they could collect from the rain, which fortunately fell pretty frequently after the first week. At last land was seen, and the men succeeded in making it, landing, and abandoning their cutter. Seven months later the Government cutter *Mermaid* put into Moreton Bay, and found two of the three men on an island living with the blacks, who had treated them kindly. The third man was away on a hunting expedition, but a bottle was left with a message informing him that he would be called for later, but it was not until September 1824 that he was rescued; so remote was the place at this time.

The barque *Peruvian* was, in 1846, wrecked near Cape Cleveland on the North Queensland coast, and

many of her people, including some women and children, drifted about on a raft for six weeks, until all but four perished, when they were washed upon the coast. The survivors were the master of the vessel and his wife, a boy, and a seamen named Murrel. They fell in with blacks, who treated them kindly, but in two years all died but Murrel. Seventeen years later, in January 1863, an Australian stock-keeper, sitting in his hut, on an out-back station on the Burdekin river, near where there is now a railway bridge, was startled by the sudden appearance of a man whom he took to be a black. The stockman levelled his gun to shoot—in those days men fired first and challenged afterwards. "Don't shoot, I'm a British object" (*sic*), said the man. It was Murrel, who afterwards became a customs officer, and whose descendants still own valuable country in the vicinity.

In the Islands of Bass Straits, and off the main continent, the sealers earned for themselves a reputation more evil than that of the buccaneers of the West Indies. Convicts on ticket-of-leave, and deserters and bolters, went sealing. Soon the Americans, getting wind of the seal fisheries, sent vessels cruising in these waters, and more than one French vessel attempted to cut in, but was driven out by the local vested interests. The sealers, as sealers, were harmless enough, but they did not stop at sealing. It was not safe for a small vessel to cruise in the vicinity of out-lying islands, for the outlaws upon them cut off cutters and schooners at every opportunity, thus making good their escape from the penal settlements, landing either upon the Islands of Polynesia, or even making the South American coast. This was not all ; the women

belonging to the now extinct tribes of Tasmanian blacks were kidnapped, and every sealer had his native wife. This state of affairs lasted down to the forties. At Preservation Island, in 1841, Captain Stokes of the *Beagle* met James Munro, "King of the Eastern Straitsmen," who had been a sealer for twenty-three years, and had three wives and a dozen half-caste children.

On Kangaroo Island, down to the twenties, there was a regular nest of pirates, most of them escaped prisoners. This gang had for a leader a scoundrel named Williams. One of the gang, named Antonio, got drunk and boasted to the crew of a passing vessel of the exploits of himself and his companions. A few weeks later this man was employed by Williams to obtain seal-skins by being lowered from a high cliff. After Antonio had been at work several hours sending up skins, the time came for him to be hauled up by the rope. When he was swinging a hundred feet in the air, Williams leant over the cliff, and reminding him that he was a fellow who could not keep his tongue quiet, coolly severed the rope, and Antonio was dashed to pieces on the rocks below. Williams and part of his gang ultimately built a schooner, in which they left the island and were never afterwards heard of.

Not thirty years ago the brig *Maria* sailed from Sydney in most remarkable circumstances. A party of young men, seduced by exaggerated stories of gold to be found in New Guinea, formed themselves into a company, and purchased an unseaworthy old vessel lying in Sydney harbour. The party consisted of seventy-five persons of all classes of society, and each subscribed £10 to the undertaking. They elected a

captain on the "one man one vote" principle, and the brig sailed in January 1872. This captain had absolutely no knowledge of navigation, there was no chart of the Barrier Reef on board the ship, and no nautical instruments. The idea was to steer north and reach New Guinea somehow. In due course the vessel struck on Bramble Reef, thirty miles east of the then new settlement at Cardwell, and twenty miles from Hinchinbrook Island—the Hinchinbrook Channel is one of the show places now on the Queensland coast, and the tourist in a fine intercolonial steamer, if he should decide to go north, will be shown the spot.

When the brig struck, the elected captain got out the best boat and announced his intention of going for help. He took six seamen with him and made the mainland, where a party of blacks attacked him and killed him and three of his men, wounding the other three, who, however, managed to escape, and reached Cardwell a week later. At Cardwell, Mr Sabben, a midshipman belonging to H.M.S. *Basilisk*, with eight blue-jackets, happened to be on board of a captured South Sea slaver, and he made a brave attempt to rescue the remainder of the party, while information of the disaster was sent in all directions. Meanwhile the people on the brig, by the aid of rafts and the remaining boat, got on shore, all but nine, who were drowned in making the land. When in due course the rescuing parties reached the scene they found a few survivors; some had been murdered by the blacks, some had gone mad from thirst and exposure, and, strange to relate, some had fallen in with blacks who had treated them kindly. Within a space of half-a-dozen miles the savages in one

place had clubbed to death, and, it is believed, eaten fourteen persons, and in another had fed and treated with the greatest kindness the other castaways. The total number of the survivors of the seventy-five persons who went out in the brig was forty—twelve were drowned on the wreck, fourteen killed by blacks, and nine were drowned off the rafts.

On March 11, 1887, the *Tamaris* of Bordeaux, bound to Noumea, ran on Penguin Island, one of the Crozets. The thirteen men of the crew managed in their boats to land safely upon another island of the group. They were then well off, for H.M.S. *Comus*, in 1880, had left upon Hog Island, in a hut built for the purpose, a stock of tinned provisions. On September 22 an albatross was picked up on the beach near Fremantle, West Australia. Scratched upon a piece of tin hung round its neck were these words: "Thirteen shipwrecked Frenchmen are refugees on the Crozets, August 4." In consequence of this message a French war vessel went to the Crozets to rescue the men. In the shelter hut on Hog Island the captain of the French ship found a letter written by the captain of the *Tamaris*, giving particulars of the wreck, and stating that, after seven months of waiting, they had consumed what little food had been saved from the wreck and most of the tinned provisions left by the *Comus*; they had therefore determined to leave in their boat for Possession Island, where they thought they could find food enough until they were rescued by a passing vessel. The French searching ship then proceeded to Possession Island, and there found that the shelter hut had never been occupied; the food left by the *Comus* was untouched, the castaways had

evidently not reached the place, and must have been wrecked again on the passage, for they were never afterwards heard of.

The schooner *Bobtail Nag*, in 1875, when off the Island of Malayta, succeeded by means of bribes in inducing the savages to give up a white man who had been living among them for seven years. In the year 1868, at St Francisco, John Renton, a native of Stromness, nineteen years of age, ran away from the vessel in which he had shipped as cabin boy; a couple of days later he was huccussed, put on board the *Renard* of Boston, and knew nothing of what had happened until he was well clear of the land, bound to M'Kean's Island for guano. On the voyage the ship called at the Sandwich group to refresh, and there, owing to the ill-treatment of the ship's company, and the persuasive influence of an old sailor known as "Boston Ned," certain of the crew determined to desert. The conspirators, numbering altogether five persons, secretly stocked a small whale-boat, that was hanging by her painter to the stern of the vessel as she lay at anchor, with some provisions and water, but at the last moment were unable to secure a compass. Then in the dead of night they embarked in the boat and cut adrift, intending to make an island some distance from the one off which their ship was lying. By dawn, however, they had lost sight of land; it fell dead calm, and they could make no headway; soon they lost all idea of their position, and thus they drifted.

At the expiration of ten days they were still out of sight of land, their food was nearly all gone, and they were beginning to despair. Five days more elapsed, then it came on to blow a gale, the little

boat flew before a mountainous sea, every soul in her expecting the next moment would be his last. For a whole day and night "Boston Ned," lashed to the steer oar, kept his post, and while the other men baled, steered the boat with a skill only to be acquired by a man who has served an apprenticeship in a whaler. Then fine weather came, and the men had time to realise that they had eaten their last crumb and drunk their last mouthful of water.

Three more days and nights passed like this, then young Renton saw "Boston Ned" whispering in the ear of another sailor, looking curiously at him the while. Ned produced a sheath knife and began testing its edge. Renton for a whole day and night kept awake, never taking his eyes from "Boston Ned," and crouching in the bows of the boat, as far as possible from the steersman. Then early one morning the youngster caught sight of a shark; it followed the boat as if waiting—a horrible suggestion to its occupants; then Renton was struck with an idea, and he whispered it hurriedly to "Boston Ned."

They had fortunately a harpoon in the boat, and Ned, with this attached to the painter, stood ready to strike when the shark could be induced to come close enough. Renton now stripped, and lying along the gunwhale of the boat, put one leg over the side, trailing it in the water. The shark presently caught sight of the bate, hesitated once or twice, then darted for it. Renton withdrew his leg just in time, and Ned launched the harpoon. The shark was caught, and the food supply renewed; the same night rain fell, and they got fresh water enough to fill the breaker. But their sufferings were not yet ended, and the shark's flesh became

too putrid even for starving men to eat. On the thirty-fourth day from leaving the ship they sighted land, and twenty-four hours later ran their boat into a little harbour, where they were instantly surrounded by savages, who, seeing them unable to walk, carried them ashore and treated them with great kindness. Ultimately, however, Renton's four companions were killed, but Renton having a powerful friend in a young chief, was spared and rescued by the *Bobtail Nag*.

This story of the Auckland Islands is only one of many that could be told of that desolate group of rocks nearly two hundred miles south of New Zealand. The schooner *Grafton*, in 1864, drove ashore there, and the crew narrowly escaped with their lives. The crew numbered five persons—the master, Musgrave, the mate, Racqual, a Frenchman, and three seamen. They got on shore all the provisions, some old sails, and a battered boat from the wreck. A few herbs grew on the rocks, and with these and the flesh of seals they were compelled to sustain life for many months, for the stock of provisions on the schooner was very small, and it was eighteen months before they were rescued. After being more than a year on the island, Racqual undertook to build a boat from the remains of the wreck and the frame of the schooner's dingey. They took six months at the work, Musgrave the while keeping a journal written in blood—his substitute for ink. Although it was calm when she was launched she nearly capsized, she was so frail and tender in the water. After some patching, Musgrave, Racqual, and one seaman ventured to put to sea in her, the others remaining behind in the hope that their comrades would reach Stewart Island, the nearest land, and send succour.

After five days at sea, Musgrave and his companions succeeded in making Port Adventure, and from there obtained help and returned for the other two men. These were brought off, and all landed safely in New Zealand.

While the *Grafton* was ashore on one island of this group, the *Invercauld* was ashore on another. Nineteen persons belonging to this vessel succeeded in getting a footing on the desolate rocks, where they remained for fourteen weeks before the survivors, three men, were taken off by a passing vessel. The limpets on the rocks, stray roots, and two seals was all the food the *Invercauld's* crew could succeed in finding. Everything in the ship had gone down with the wreck. It is singular that during the time both crews were castaways on this group, they saw nothing and knew nothing of each other being there. The schooner sent to the rescue of the *Grafton's* crew, the *Flying Scud*, while she was in the group, came across the skeleton of a man, evidently one of the *Invercauld's* crew, who had wandered from his fellows, and had fallen, exhausted, to die on the rocks, but there was nothing by which he could be identified.

The American ship *General Grant* was wrecked among this group, in May 1866, on a voyage from Melbourne to England, carrying many diggers as passengers, and many thousands of pounds in gold. The ship went ashore in the middle of the night on one of the small islets, and in a most extraordinary manner was driven by the sea into a kind of cavern in the rocks. Of the eighty-three souls on board, only fifteen, among them one woman, managed, by the aid of the boats, to make a landing on Disappointment Island. James Tier, one of the passengers, during the trying time between

the occurrence of the disaster and the eighteen months that elapsed before the ten unfortunate castaways who survived were rescued, showed the courage and resourcefulness of a great leader. The captain and many of the crew had ascended the rigging of the ship when she ran into the awful opening in the rocks. Tier, meanwhile, succeeded with the aid of others in getting out a boat, and as this boat with the survivors pulled past the mouth of the cavern, they saw the ship with all who had remained on board go to the bottom. Four men, about eight months after the wreck occurred, fitted up the boat and sailed away in an endeavour to bring help. They were never afterwards heard of. In November 1867 a whaling brig happened to touch at the island, and a boat's crew from her came across Tier and his party. They were clothed in sealskins, and were in such a condition that the captain of the whaler believed them to be mad, and was at first frightened to take them on board. But one of the crew of the ship happening to recognise Tier, the castaways were ultimately embarked, treated with every kindness, and landed at Melbourne. Tier spent the remainder of his life in Australia, organising many expeditions to attempt the recovery of the gold from the sunken wreck, but nothing came of these ventures, and Tier, about ten years ago, just as he had completed a plan to make one more venture, was one morning found dead in his bed. An American expedition was, some months ago, reported as about to attempt the recovery of the gold.

Tier thus describes how the ship, after she struck, was sucked into the cave:—"In the darkness we saw nothing save the dark mass above and around us. Lamps were held over the side, as the ship was lying

very easily ; we could then see the overhanging rocks, and no place where a bird could rest upon them. Soundings were taken, and there were 25 fathoms under her stern, but she kept working into the cave. The boats were thought of, but the captain thought it best to wait for daylight, as great lumps of rock were falling in all directions. As the ship was carried in, she caught the overhanging rocks with her fore-royal mast, and carried it away, then the other masts followed. At last daylight came, and with great difficulty I and some others managed to get away with one boat, launched over the stern by means of a projecting spar, rigged for the purpose, for there was no room between the ship's side and the walls of the cave, which appeared to be about 400 ft. high, and overhanging."

The story of Benjamin Boyd, who sailed the schooner yacht *Wanderer* under the flag of the Royal Yacht Squadron to New South Wales, is curious. Boyd came out to Sydney in 1841 in connection with some important banking business, and purchased a great quantity of land in more than one of the Australian Colonies, speculating largely in the South Sea trade. He owned many whale ships, and was the first man to introduce the South Sea Islander, or Kanaka, to the Australian labour market ; he was also the first to import camels for crossing the dry country with supplies for his outlying stations. His speculations at length grew to such a scale, including the building of a town and making of a harbour, Boydtown, on the south-western coast of New Wales, for his whalers, that the shareholders in the great financial concerns, in which he was the chief manipulator, disagreed with him, and he resigned from the concerns, setting sail in the *Wanderer* for the new gold diggings

in California in 1850. A year of this life was enough for him, and he sailed for Sydney, calling at Guadalcanar, in the Solomon Islands, on the way. Boyd went ashore in the yacht's boat, sculled by a Kanaka, was attacked by the natives and killed, the yacht and those who remained on board being attacked by savages in canoes, and only beating them off after a desperate engagement. After an unsuccessful endeavour to recover Boyd's remains, the yacht sailed, and was wrecked coming up the New South Wales coast, only a few of her company escaping to tell their story.

Christian and his companions in the *Bounty* are sometimes said to have been incited to mutiny by the beauty of the Tahitian women, but in more than one instance where sailors have lost their ships in the South Seas, a white woman has been the cause of the mischief. Early in the century, a brig owned by Mr Kerr, American Consul at Manila, and commanded by a man named Melton, was despatched with a cargo to Batavia, with orders to bring back goods from that port suitable for disposal at the Philippines. Melton was provided with a letter of credit entitling him to draw against a Batavian house for £4000. On arriving at his port, Melton, having sold his cargo and cashed his letter of credit, sold the brig and purchased a ship called the *Duke of Portland*, and sailed, as he wrote to Kerr, for the South American coast, stating in his letter not to expect him for some time, as he had gone on a good trading expedition. The letter of credit was duly presented and taken up by Kerr, who was much respected at Manila. Meanwhile Melton got a charter from the Dutch Company at Batavia to carry rice to one of the islands in the Dutch Archipelago, but instead of

carrying out his charter, he sailed to the Mauritius and there sold the cargo ; whence he took the ship to Cape Town, and there embarked a woman named Elizabeth Morey. He then sailed, intending to make Lima, there sell the ship, and settle in South America ; but, on the voyage, he called at the Friendly Islands. At Tonga the ship was boarded by large numbers of natives, and among them was an Irishman named Doyle, a castaway who had been wrecked a year or two previously, and had become a sort of chief ; and also a Malay calling himself Charley. At a signal given by these two scoundrels, the natives suddenly attacked the crew of the *Duke of Portland*, and murdered nearly all hands, including the master, and carrying off the woman, who was three years kept prisoner.

In 1804 the American ship *Union* was off the island, when Doyle and the Malay boarded her and induced her crew to lower boats and land. The woman Morey was put in a canoe and ordered to assure the strangers of the friendly intentions of the natives. She went off to the ship, and was at first too well watched to do other than she was ordered, and in consequence some of the *Union's* people landed and were murdered. A second trip was made to the ship to induce others to come ; then Morey sprang out of the canoe and swam to the ship, crying out to the people on board for help, and telling them the truth. The woman was taken on board just in time to save her life, and the *Union's* anchor being apeak, and her topsails hoisted, the remainder of the crew managed with their firearms to drive off the canoes and get the ship to sea, and in due course she arrived in Sydney.

The crimes of the Kanaka slave trade—"black-

birding" was the slang word for it—are quite equal in their atrocity to anything that is recorded in the stories of the "Middle Passage." In the forties, two British owned vessels, because the natives of one of the Pacific Islands objected to them cutting wood, shot a score or more of the islanders, and driving a number of others into a cave, filled it with wood and burnt the natives alive. The murder of Bishop Patterson in the Swallow Isles, Santa Cruz group, in 1871, is attributed to the exasperation of the islanders by some outrage committed by a labour vessel that had called there a short time previously. Kidnappers have been known to land disguised as missionaries; and it is a fact that native chiefs have contracted to supply skippers of traders with human heads, these being at one time of commercial value in the South Seas; so many heads from one group sold at another group would purchase so many Kanakas. The "Carl" atrocities took place so late as 1871. The chief scoundrel in that horrible series of murders was permitted to turn Queen's evidence, and from his own words, as reported at the trial of his accomplices, natives were kidnapped in the New Hebrides group in the following manner: The brig was hove to off an island, her boats were lowered, and the natives were encouraged to come off in their canoes. Then pig-iron was dropped into the boats, and the natives, as they struck out to clear themselves of their sinking canoes, were stunned by the men in the Carl's boat and hauled out of the water as fast as possible. After this had gone on for some time at various islands, the ship's hold was filled with slaves, and one night, while at sea, the poor creatures made an attempt to break out and gain the deck. Then the Carl's crew, led by one Dr James

Patrick Murray, part owner of the vessel, and, later on, "Queen's" witness, opened fire with revolvers and rifles on the people below. Fifty were killed, and about sixteen badly wounded. The vessel was at this time out of sight of land, but killed and wounded alike were hoisted up from below and thrown overboard. Some of the wounded, when they were thrown overboard, were still tied by the legs and hands, as they had been deposited in the hold, and it was sworn at the trial that Dr Murray sat on the coaming of the hatchway and sang, "Marching through Georgia," while he emptied his revolvers on the islanders below. Two men were convicted and sentenced to death for the crimes, but the sentence was afterwards commuted to penal servitude for life; others of the crew got off with two years, two others were acquitted on a legal technicality, and Murray, by turning informer, entirely escaped punishment.

Labour vessels still import Kanakas to Queensland, but under regulations and Government supervision, so that the public, when objection is offered, are assured that it is impossible that the Kanakas can suffer any injustice; it is, however, well to remember that the Carl atrocities occurred not thirty years ago, and a man-o'-war fell in with that slaver a few hours after the murders, and could find nothing wrong on board, so beautifully regular and innocent did everything appear.

More than enough has been written of missionary work in the South Seas. That it has been a strong civilising influence in the islands, as elsewhere, there can be no doubt; it is equally certain that in a few generations the missionary business of the present century will be ranked with the Tulip Mania, the South Sea

Bubble, and other popular delusions ; and our descendants will read with amazement of that amiable public who subscribed its thousands for mission steam yachts and similar agreeable enterprises for the benefit of the well-fed savages in the Pacific, while hundreds of men, women, and children, their winter shelter the dry arches of Thames bridges, year in year out, starved in the sight of their fellow Christians.

CHAPTER XIII

ON OUR COAST

The Lifeboat—The Lighthouse—Coasting Seamen—Smugglers and Wreckers—Yachts and Fishermen—Lloyd's and Insurance Frauds.

IN the seventies of last century, a young man named Henry Greathead, belonging to Shields, having completed his apprenticeship to a boatbuilder, was "bitten with the sea fever," so shipped himself as carpenter on a vessel supposed to be bound for the West Indies. But the master of this ship had quite another object than honest trading in view. His design was to put the vessel ashore in some place where the boat could comfortably land the crew; then report the loss of the vessel, and secure as reward some portion of the fraudulently obtained insurance money. The master and crew could not agree on the means to attain this end, with the result that the crime was bungled, the ship was stranded on the French coast, and her people were taken prisoners by the French. The captain made out a claim on behalf of the owners for the insurance money, and he asked the crew to sign the document. Greathead objected, and so influenced the crew that they also refused to do so; further, Greathead wrote to Lloyd's,

and told the underwriters the whole circumstances of the attempt to defraud them.

The French people, hearing of all this business, for the correspondence had to pass through the hands of the military authorities, kept the master of the ship prisoner, but sent Greathead home to England with a message to the effect that he was an honest fellow, who deserved better than to be kept in Calais town jail.

Greathead, on his arrival at Portsmouth, heard that the pressgang was capturing every seafaring man entering the port ; so to escape the press, he shipped immediately on board a vessel bound to the West Indies. This ship on her way out was captured by an American privateer, and Greathead was offered rank and pay to join the "rebels," but refused, and was exchanged with others for some American prisoners. Landing in New York, before he had time to leave the wharf, he was impressed on an English sloop of war, and remained in the service until 1784, when he returned to Shields, married, settled down as a boatbuilder, and invented, or rather perfected a lifeboat, launching her in 1789. The original patentee of the lifeboat was Lionel Lukin, a London coachbuilder, who was granted his patent in 1785 ; but Greathead's boat was, to a large extent, original in design, the principal feature being the curvature of the keel, which Greathead devised after a long series of experiments.

Greathead was a poor man, and, in 1801, he petitioned the House of Commons for a grant, and his petition was backed by many philanthropists who were anxious to obtain funds to build more boats. They had good reason to believe in the boat, for, by 1801, she had saved between four hundred and five hundred lives ; but the

House of Commons said that it was a work that should be left to private enterprise, and having taken a lot of evidence before a Select Committee, got rid of Greathead by making him a grant of £1200.

Meanwhile, the public spirit of some leading citizens had set on foot a movement to supply funds. The committee of Lloyd's remembered that this Greathead was the man who, a few years before, had written to them, exposing an attempt to obtain insurance money fraudulently, and certain of the underwriters thereupon "took up" the man and backed him with money and influence, as also did the Trinity House. The Duke of Northumberland, before this time, had supplied the money for the first boat, named after him, and stationed at North Shields. This boat was 30 ft. long by 10 ft. broad, pulled ten oars, double-banked, and was whale-boat shaped, much the same in appearance as the present ordinary lifeboats. By 1803 Greathead had built thirty boats, and he, giving evidence before the Select Committee, said that the profit made by him was from £10 to £15 on each boat, and the cost of the largest boats £165.

From this beginning sprang the Royal National Lifeboat Institution, founded in 1824, whose honourable boast it is to-day, that it is supported entirely by voluntary contributions. Its revenue averages £80,000 a year, spent in keeping up about three hundred lifeboat stations on the coasts of the United Kingdom. The average cost of each boat is £1000, and its yearly expense £100. On the coasts of most of our colonies there are boats maintained at the public expense, and abroad, early in the century, Greathead built many lifeboats to the order of foreign governments. The

boat dependent on oars developed into the larger sailing boat ; then, in 1894, steam was tried, and there are now several steam lifeboats in use.

There is no end to the list of inventions, some admirable, some possible of development into useful purposes, and many silly, that have been brought before the public to save shipwrecked persons. Breakwaters, lifeboats, lifebelts, and the rocket apparatus are the most practical, and these have been developed more than others during the century. Watertight compartments on shipboard, when they act, which is nearly as often as when they do not, are likely to save vessels from disaster by collision. The only useful watertight compartments are permanent ones. A ship should be built with compartments that cannot be opened by the crew—water-tight doors cannot be depended upon—and so-called compartments, in some ships, are too frequently used for storage or cargo purposes.

Breakwaters, during the century, have in many cases converted dangerous seaports into safe harbours of refuge—that of Plymouth, begun in 1812, took more than a quarter of a century to build, and now, to keep it in order 25,000 tons of masonry every year are required. Convicts began the Portland breakwater in 1849, and completed it in 1872, and similar work is now being carried out at other ports.

In like fashion to the growth of the lifeboat service, the rocket apparatus and similar devices have been improved, and are now in very general use on most civilised coasts ; from Captain Manby's mortar, whence a ball carrying a line attached was fired, we have D'Arcy Irvine's shoulder-line-throwing gun, worked on the same principle, the object being to establish communi-

cation with a vessel ashore by means of a small line—an object too often defeated, even when the line is fired over the ship, by the stupidity, ignorance, or want of nerve of the men on board, who, though supposed to be well acquainted with the working of the apparatus, have, in very many instances, never in their lives seen one.

A good deal of the coast life can be seen from the tower of a lighthouse or the deck of a light-vessel. During some months spent in the Trinity House service, I saw something of the hardships, not to speak of the danger incurred in the lifeboat service. A vessel was ashore on the Maplin Sands in a January gale, when, though within sight of the mouth of the Thames, there was a sea running that the oldest seamen on the light-vessel on which I was declared no lifeboat could live in. But the lifeboat came out, and, after many hours of terribly hard work, saved all the shipwrecked crew. Nearly all the lifeboat crew when they returned were carried out of their boat frost-bitten, and that severely!

The coxswain of this boat was Robert Legerton, who died in 1892. He was originally a Deal boatman—perhaps the finest of our boat sailors—and his record of fourteen years in charge of the Clacton-on-Sea lifeboat was: "saved 216 lives and 14 ships." Even that record is beaten by Mr C. Fish, late of the Ramsgate lifeboat, who, during twenty-six years' service, put out 591 times and saved 877 lives.

"Putting out" on our coast in a boat, even in a life-boat, in bad weather, is a test of seamanship that few deep-water sailors would survive. I have seen men who have never been seasick, downright ill on board a light-

vessel, through the terrific pitching and tossing of her, as she strained at the end of a couple of enormous cables, with four hundred and odd fathoms of chain and two mushroom anchors keeping her on her station.

There is a story of an American schooner that was such a good sea-boat that one night she capsized and turned completely over, coming up the other side without wetting anybody, and not a man on board would have known what had happened if it had not been that the clews of the sailors' hammocks had a round turn in them! Such an accident as this only happens in American waters; but from personal experience I can vouch for it that a light-vessel, not far from the Thames' mouth, will roll a half-filled can empty, and will lie at such an angle that men can only walk on all fours on her decks, or she will pitch so violently that a kettle will literally jump off the galley stove.

Lighthouses, light-vessels, buoys, and all the rest of the "finger posts" of our coast, have grown with the century, from the fire *chauffer*, to the electric flash, visible thirty miles distant; from the primitive blaze of a bucket full of coals, extant down to the twenties, to the present-day lighthouses, that have sometimes cost £100,000 to erect. There are about three hundred and sixty lighthouses on the coasts of the United Kingdom and Ireland, the oldest of them, the Eddystone, dating from Winstanley's wooden tower of 1699—though this was not a true lighthouse, as we understand the word now—until Smeaton completed his tower of 1759, which lasted till replaced in 1882. Smeaton's structure was not then worn out, but the rock on which it was built had been undermined by the waves. From half-a-dozen lights at the beginning of the century we have about

seventy now, and the oldest of them is the Nore, dating from 1732. The history of the lighthouse and the stories of lighthouse-keepers have been too often told to bear re-telling—every schoolboy remembers who Grace Darling was, and what she did; but a word on the excellence of the present Trinity House Service. Early in the century old men, incapable of doing anything else, were usually given charge of such poor lights as then existed—a system still pursued in many parts of the world, where old sailors are provided for in this fashion, living with their families in houses adjacent to the light-towers. In England the Trinity House erects beacons and lighthouses, and maintains them, and buoys all channels and rivers, subject to certain exceptions in harbours and rivers controlled by local authorities, and besides these duties the corporation examines and licenses pilots, and controls many kindred matters relating to shipping, including the duty of piloting the Queen whenever she makes a sea voyage. In Scotland and in Ireland, there are boards having charge of these affairs, but the Trinity House has much to say in advising and regulating lights in all parts of the British Dominions, and the advice and assistance of the corporation is often sought by foreign Governments.

The Trinity House divides the English coasts into districts ; each district is in charge of a superintendent, who has under him a staff of light-keepers, light-vessel crews, crews of tenders, fog signalmen, and others. The principal district is the Thames, extending from Harwich on the north, to Ramsgate on the south, the head-quarters of the station and of the working service being at Blackwall, while the head-quarters of the

corporation at Trinity House, Tower Hill, is almost as well known as the Tower itself.

The men of the service are all now properly graded, entering the lighthouse or light-vessel service as young men in the capacity of assistant lighthouse-keepers, or as able seamen of light-vessels, and gradually learning their business, until they are too old to work, when they are pensioned. They serve regular periods of two months on duty at the lights, and one month on shore, working on the Trinity House wharves. At a few of the shore lighthouses, the men are permanently quartered with their families in houses near the light-towers, but in most cases the light-keepers serve, as do seamen in light-vessels, in regular terms, two men on duty at a time and one on shore; in the more isolated lighthouses three keepers on duty are considered necessary. A light-vessel's crew, as a rule, consists of a master and a mate, on duty alternate months, three light-keepers, and six or seven seamen, of whom two light-keepers and four or five seamen are always on board the ship. On board a floating light the duty of a crew includes keeping a look-out for vessels running into danger, and warning them off by firing signals, communicating with shore life-saving stations by means of rockets and signal guns, and, thanks to wireless telegraphy, also, now, in some cases, by telegraph; and, of course, the chief duty of looking after the lantern.

To keep the light trimmed, and, if it is of the revolving description, regularly to wind the clockwork of the revolving apparatus, needs, at night, constant and intelligent attention, and when there is a fog, the crew of the light-vessel have plenty to keep them employed in sounding fog signals.

Sometimes the fog-horn is a syren driven by a hot-air engine, an apparatus that sends forth such horrible noises that, while it is going, men on board can never sleep, no matter how long they have been familiar with it; at other times the fog signal is merely a big gong sounded by one of the crew, who, perched on the bridge where it is hung, during the fog, continually hammers away—an antiquated and tedious process, unworthy of this end of the century.

Not only in the interests of passing vessels, but in that of the light-ship, is the fog signal important. On several occasions I have been roused from my sleep by the cry of "all hands on deck, there is a vessel upon us," a rush from below, half-dressed, to the boat davits follows, and the crew of the light-ship are just in time to see through the gloom of the fog the outline of the hull, and hear the thrash of the propeller, of some steamer that has thus shaved past their floating home.

Trimming the light, regulating the ventilation of the lantern, and cleaning its glass windows, is a difficult job in bad weather, when you have to keep your footing on the rigging of the lantern mast, and use both hands to cut wicks, holding the lantern door open the fewest possible inches the while, and taking very particular care that you do not stop the revolution. There is always danger of your light blowing out, and pilots are, properly, ever ready to report at head-quarters that the *Mouse*, or the *Gunfleet*, or the *Nore*, was at such and such a time stopped for so many seconds, or was showing white instead of red or green, because the coloured glass door of the lantern was opened too wide.

It is not pleasant either, when it is blowing hard, to hear the report that the so-and-so mail-boat has

run over the so-and-so gas buoy, and that it is your business to go off and relight it. These gas buoys are very handy inventions for places where it is not worth while to put a regular light. A buoy—a big iron cylinder—is so constructed as to contain gas for several weeks, and has a gas burner giving a fair light, enclosed in a lantern. The light will serve admirably until, sooner or later, it is run into by some vessel and damaged, and then it is the business of the nearest light-vessel to lower a boat and repair damages. For onlookers there is a good deal of fun to be got out of this job. First there is a long pull to reach the buoy, then there is the extreme nicety of management required to keep the boat alongside the cylinder, which bounds about in the water much as a big rubber ball bounces on a paving stone ; then there is the crowning piece of fun when a man succeeds in jumping upon the buoy and tries to balance himself while effecting repairs. Standing on a buoy is just such a feat as the circus clown performs when he walks on a ball : when the clown falls off he rolls on the sawdust ; when the man slips or his weight topples the buoy, he goes overboard altogether, and gets a ducking. A regulation of the Trinity House is that all servants should insure their lives.

In lighthouses the lights are much more complicated than are those on light-vessels, and it requires a good mechanic to be chief light-keeper in charge of the beautiful dioptric lanterns with all their complicated arrangements of fine lenses and delicate machinery of burners. Sperm oil was the chief illuminant during the first half of the century, then came rape oil, and now mineral oil is almost universal. Gas and electricity

are in use, but not to a large extent. In fogs these lights have no material advantage over other lights, and the cost of the plant necessary to keep them going does not justify their general use.

The old-fashioned smuggler was old-fashioned fifty years ago. For stories of smuggling and of wreckers it is necessary to go back to the close of the last century. Wreckers, during the nineteenth century, have generally been persons who stole wreckage, but who were not criminal enough to bring about the disaster by such means as false lights and similar tricks, for which the Irish and the Cornish coasts were, perhaps, more notorious than other parts of the United Kingdom; though, to do justice to the South, the folks at the back of the Isle of Wight did understand the trick of tying a lantern to a horse's tail on a stormy night, as can be seen by the reports of the newspapers a hundred years ago.

But if bringing about a wreck was not a common crime, making the most of the disaster was never neglected, and even going to the length of murder in the pursuit of valuable flotsam and jetsam was by no means infrequent. The century was well into its first quarter, and a good many rascals were hanged or transported, before the established custom of plundering first, and rescuing last of all, was altered for the better.

Wrecking, in the criminal sense, must not be confused with hovelling, a means of turning an honest penny still pursued upon our coasts. The hovellers take risks in all sorts of weather, in all sorts of boats, in a search for what they can legally salve from wrecks; sometimes sailing so close to the wind as to put the coastguard

into a very suspicious humour with them. Here, for example, is an instance which occurred at the mouth of the Thames in 1852, and which is possible now, though not likely to happen in such crowded waters.

The schooner *Renown* went ashore on the Nore Sand at midnight on a Saturday in July; the crew landed at Sheerness at 4 A.M. on the Sunday to look for help, and returning in a few hours to unbend the schooner's sails and remove her stores, found her surrounded by ten or twelve boats crowded with men, who, under the plea of rendering help, boarded the schooner as she lay, her deck just above water. The helpers then set to work, and, taking no heed of the remonstrances of the schooner's crew, with axes, saws, and knives, began to cut down spars, rigging, and sails, and even to saw up what they could reach of the hull. The master of the schooner then went back to Sheerness and asked for help from the dockyard, and a small steamer, with a force of blue-jackets and marines, was sent to protect the wreck. When the Government steamer arrived on the scene, the wreckers rowed away for the Essex shore, and were chased, but not caught, by the man-o'-war's men. Then the Government steamer went back to Sheerness, and, as soon as she was out of sight, the wreckers returned to their plunder. Later on a guard-boat was sent down to look after the wreck, but before this arrived, everything valuable of cargo and gear had been stolen.

The coastguard and revenue cutters still find some work to do, but much of their time is usefully employed in keeping a look-out for vessels in distress, and in manning lifeboats and rocket apparatus. The old-fashioned smuggler, who got himself transported and

afterwards, in many cases, became "a leading colonist," is now as extinct as the buccaneer.

Johnston, who flourished late enough to be accused of having organised a scheme for rescuing Napoleon from St Helena, but who died before he could put it into execution, was about the last of the notables.

In August 1797 Johnston was a prisoner convicted of smuggling, and hearing of the expedition to Holland, he succeeded in making his escape from prison and getting on board one of the ships. He did such good service on this occasion that Sir Ralph Abercromby and the Duke of York interceded for him with Pitt, and he was pardoned. Soon after he received his pardon he was at the old game again, was captured, and lodged in the Fleet, making his escape from that gaol in a very clever manner, and got across to Holland, where he managed a big system of smuggling which employed many men and vessels. When war was renewed, the French thought so much of him that they first persuaded, then tried to force, him into their service, and on account of his refusal to turn traitor, put him in gaol, whence he subsequently escaped and made his way to America.

The coastguardsman now, in the sight of the seaside visitor, seems quite superfluous, his spy-glass being of little more apparent use than to relieve the monotony of dawdling about the beach by making out the rig of passing vessels; but apart from his valuable life-saving services, the coastguardsman still has occasional chances of setting his wits, if not his weapons, against smugglers. Fishermen and small coasting-vessels still smuggle in a mild way, but present-day methods are as unlike to the old-fashioned as are

area sneak thieves to Hounslow Heath highwaymen, and the cargoes that are run now are seldom worth the risk incurred.

In a newspaper report, in the year 1818, it is stated that a French rowing boat was captured, landing goods on Southsea beach, near Fort Cumberland. Her cargo consisted of 1132 yards of French silk, 19 Angola shawls, 11 dozen pair Angola gloves, 36 pair silk stockings, 42 snuff boxes, 56 dozen kid gloves, 225 yards of cambric, 1 petticoat of fur, and 16 silk sashes. In the same paper another paragraph states that :—"The produce of the *Fox* smuggling cutter, captured a short time ago, on the coast of Ireland, by the *Vendeleur* revenue cruiser, amounted to £85,791, 15s. 10d. after deducting all expenses, which have been thus divided :—Sir Benjamin Hallowell, admiral of the station, £10,721, 9s. 5d.; Mr Hoskings, commander of the *Vendeleur*, £21,441, 18s. 11d.; Mr Spencer, first mate, £10,721, 9s. 5d.; Mr Collins, purser, £4251, 15s. 8d.; the gunner, boatswain, and carpenter, £2251, 15s. 8d.; to the remainder of the crew, £112, 17s. 10d. each.

At this end of the century most of the smuggling is done by well-to-do continental tourists, who defraud the revenue by smuggling scents and silks concealed on their persons when travelling ; but even this kind of thing is going out of fashion, and ingenious devices on ship-board, once common, of stowing tobacco in strange places, have by frequent use of them become familiar to revenue officers. I have seen examples of this within recent years. An angle-iron beam, supporting the roof of a ship's deck-house, was filled with plugs of tobacco by the petty officers living in the house. A light lathe of wood was fixed on to this, and a coat of paint given to

it, with the result that the iron beam looked very natural, and no one thought a man not in the secret could possibly detect the deception. The ship duly arrived in the Thames, and the searchers went to the forecastle and deck-houses, overhauled the men's kits and bedding, and found nothing. One of the two men searching the deck-house cast his eyes round for a possible corner of concealment, and looked at the roof. "What is that?" he said to his mate; "a solid wooden beam running across the deck-house in an iron ship! No, no, that won't do;" the next moment he had mounted on a sea-chest, and with the aid of the searchers' tool, a long "pricker," had pierced the iron beam in several places, discovering by the smell of the instrument that the beam was stuffed with tobacco. A jack-knife soon prised out the cakes, and the whole plot was blown. Of course, every one denied knowledge of the matter, and the tobacco was forfeited.

Filling the chines on the bottoms of wooden deck buckets with tobacco, and stowing it in the man-holes of boilers, in the coils of ropes, and similar dodges, have long since been played out. But within my own knowledge, a good deal of smuggling was done some years ago in Zuyder Zee schuts bringing eels to Billingsgate. The skippers of these vessels stowed tobacco and other contraband goods in watertight tins among the eels in the water-washed double bottoms of their vessels, and disposed of it to small boats, met with on their way up the coast. Not much harm was done to the revenue by the trade, as the receivers were mostly coasting seamen and fishermen, who only purchased enough tobacco for their own use, paying half-a-crown a pound for seven-

teen ounces of inferior Dutch shag, the smuggler making about two shillings on each pound he sold.

Lloyd's opened as a coffee-house in 1688, by 1788 had grown into an important association of marine insurance underwriters, with offices at the Royal Exchange, and in 1811 became a Corporation by Act of Parliament, it being then established for the "carrying out of marine insurance, for the interests of the members of the Association, and for the collection and diffusion of intelligence and information relating to shipping." The amount of property insured at Lloyd's now amounts to £4,000,000 or £5,000,000 sterling, and to this Corporation we owe much of the excellent system of regulations derived for the purpose of sending seaworthy ships to sea ; we owe to the same Corporation the extensive and reliable service of signal stations on our coast, so complete, even early in the century, that the British Government was indebted, and confessed its indebtedness to it, for receiving war news earlier than it reached ministers through official channels.

Lloyd's Register of Shipping, for some years managed by a committee altogether separate from the underwriters, is the most complete record of the world's shipping in existence, giving, as it does, not only a complete account of all British ships, but a history of shipmasters, thus enabling insurance brokers to calculate their risks, with not only the particulars of the vessels before them, but with the records for trustworthiness, or otherwise, of the men chiefly responsible for their navigation. There are, as a matter of fact, several other registers and classifiers of ships, though Lloyd's Register does most of the English business, and a good deal of the foreign, for to be classified "A1 at

Lloyd's" is to a ship "a first-class life" in insurance business.

The history of Lloyd's has been well and often written, and some pages of it make very entertaining reading; for example, the story of the loss of the *Lutine*, which begins with the close of the last and runs through the present century. The *Lutine*, one of the North Sea Squadron under Admiral Duncan, was a 32-gun frigate, and she left Yarmouth with a quantity of bullion on board for Hamburg on the morning of October the 9th, 1799, and, for some unexplained reason, eighteen hours later, went ashore on the dangerous shoals off the Zuyder Zee. One man only was saved from the wreck, and he expired soon after being picked up, being unable before he died to give an explanation of the disaster.

Through the whole of the present century runs the curious story of the search for the sunken treasure in the *Lutine*, computed, after careful calculation, to amount to upwards of £1,175,000, of which sum about £100,000 has been recovered in gold and silver bars and Dutch guilders. The salvors have at different times been Dutch and English companies, Lloyd's agents and the Dutch Government, not to speak of the hundreds of Zuyder Zee fishermen who have informally joined in the search. Lloyd's, a few weeks after the wreck, paid the insurance claims in full, but their agents recovered less from the wreck than would pay for the expense incurred in searching for it. After much trouble, the Netherlands Government, who claimed the wreck, granted the underwriters a half share in it—an arrangement so hampered by conditions as to be scarcely worth accepting—but the whole story has been often told

before, and the mementos recovered in 1859, still to be seen at Lloyd's rooms, in the shape of a table and chair made from the wreck, and the bell and rudder-chain of the frigate, form the text, at regular intervals, of magazine articles on the wreck of the *Lutine*.

Other pages in Lloyd's history record curious stories of attempts to defraud the underwriters. Here are some of them :—

At daybreak on a November morning, in 1802, William Codlin, ex-master of the brig *Adventure*, was taken out of Newgate, placed on a cart, and, amid the jeers of the crowd, slowly driven to Execution Dock, where he was duly hanged for attempting to defraud Lloyd's by scuttling his vessel. But the greater rascals in this crime had escaped justice, owing to the imperfect state of the law and the skill of their counsel. Two London shipowners, named Easterly and Macfarlane, purchased the *Adventure* in May 1802. In June she was loaded with a general cargo, alleged to consist of plate, cutlery, watches, etc., and was cleared for Gibraltar and Leghorn, her owners having insured her for about £5000. The vessel left the Thames on July 8, and took just a month to get off Brighton, having, in the meanwhile, called at Yarmouth, landed some of her crew, who did not approve of the captain's proceedings, and shipped others less scrupulous. Off Brighton, a man named Cooper, under the instructions of Captain Codling, deliberately bored a number of holes in the ship's bottom, and the brig, being close in to Brighton beach, began to sink. Several fishermen came alongside in their boats and offered assistance, but Codling ordered them off. The revenue-cutter *Swallow* then came along, and the lieutenant in charge of her took the

brig in tow, and endeavoured to beach her, but she sank two miles off the land, leaving only her topmasts above water. Codling and his crew, meanwhile, had got into their boat, and, it being a perfectly calm and fine Sunday, rowed ashore comfortably, and walked up to the nearest tavern.

This was such a barefaced piece of rascality, every one on Brighton beach having witnessed it, that the matter soon got abroad, and the underwriters at Lloyd's sent a reliable man to investigate. This man arrived from London on the Tuesday, and, producing his authority, ordered Codling and his men to remain in the tavern until he gave further orders ; the owners, meanwhile, having been interviewed in London, gave a promise to assist in making inquiries. Instead of keeping their promise, Macfarlane went down to Brighton and arranged secretly for the escape of Codling. The brig in a day or two was hauled high and dry on the beach, and the surveyors then discovered the cause of her sinking. In the course of a week or two Codling was captured while attempting to make his way to the Continent ; the sailor who had scuttled the ship turned King's evidence ; without any difficulty several additional witnesses were obtained, and Codling, the two owners, and the supercargo were brought to trial. The last three were acquitted on technical points, though there was plenty of undoubted proof that they were the chief scoundrels. The two owners were defended by Thomas Erskine, the future Lord Chancellor, but Codling was sentenced to death.

The brig *Colina*, in July 1840, was insured for £1250. William Simpson, her master, deliberately, in fine weather, ran her ashore a few months later off the Texel. The owner was proved to be a highly respect-

able person. But Simpson was transported for life. The owner was put on his trial, but Simpson declared that he had cast the ship away for no other reason than that he had a mind to it, and as Mr Justice Maule said, he richly deserved to be punished, seeing that by his own showing he had committed the crime at the instigation of no one, and the owner was quite innocent.

The case of the *Dryad*, in 1841, was another instance. Her owners insured the brig for £2000 with one firm of underwriters, and for a further £2000, secretly, with another, pretending by means of false bills of lading to have put on board cargo which was never shipped. The captain, with a great deal of difficulty, managed to wreck the ship in the West Indies. The swindle, in due course, was discovered, and the two owners were transported for life.

This sort of crime was by no means uncommon during the first half of the century, and we have not been free from it in later years. In 1867, for example, Lloyd's prosecuted, and secured the conviction of an insurance broker, the mate, and another man who had scuttled the *Severn*, which had been insured for £15,000, a sum greatly in excess of her value. The captain of the ship, in this case, turned informer, so that the first villain in the piece was, on this occasion, duly punished ; one of the men convicted was proved to have been concerned in the suspicious loss of fifteen vessels.

The evidence in all these cases, as indeed right through the history of Lloyd's, shows that the Association of Underwriters as a body have been thoroughly honourable men, perfectly fitted to be entrusted (as the peculiar growth of the institution has brought about) with practically the whole responsibility for the seaworthi-

ness of our maritime shipping—a condition of affairs unknown in any other country. Our Board of Trade represents such government interference as exists in England, but Lloyd's surveyors make the extent of that interference, or the necessity for it, very slight indeed.

It used to be the vulgar idea that unseaworthy ships were sent to sea to be lost for the sake of the insurance, with the full knowledge of the broker, who was largely responsible for the crimes of shipowners. There is nothing further from the truth; the most searching investigations have proved that while insurance brokers have to take risks of all kinds, and there have been dishonest men among them, the system, as a whole, slowly built up in the course of a couple of hundred years, is the most effectual in protecting the public, provides the best safeguards possible, and does a great part of the business of shipping, much better in every way than it could be done if undertaken by Government.

The fisheries of the British Isles have changed wonderfully during the century. The facilities of ice packing, of railway carriage, and of steamers to convey the fish from the fishing grounds to the markets, have made it much easier to regulate supply to demand. Until the fifties fishermen were, for a market, practically confined to the immediate neighbourhood of the seaports to which their fishing vessels belonged. Now we have steam trawlers, decked, and well-boats, instead of open boats and sailing-smacks, although both of the last two classes of vessel still outnumber the steamers. About 14,000 men and boys are employed in the North Sea fisheries alone.

Yachting practically dates from the beginning of this century, for although the Cork Harbour Water Club,

now the Royal Cork Yacht Club, was formed in 1720, yacht-racing as a sport, as we understand it, did not take regular form, until a party of Cowes yacht owners started the Royal Yacht Squadron Club at Cowes in 1812. In the twenties, the Thames, the Clyde, and Plymouth started clubs, and the Mersey, the Harwich, the Southampton, and many others were formed by the forties, William IV. having helped to make the sport popular by his institution of the Royal Yacht Squadron Cup in 1834.

The Americans took up the sport in 1844, and in 1851 won their first race from the English with the *America*, and the America Cup has since been an institution. The Americans still hold the Cup in spite of our endeavours, ending with that of Sir Thomas Lipton in 1899, to win it back. We have, however, not much to regret in this. From small vessels suitable for trading, yet sailing fast, in which builders took as much pride for their seaworthiness as for the speed of their craft, the modern racing yacht has become a mere speed machine. And while we are still an easy first in the building of steel sea-going vessels, we need not regret that we are only a good second in the science of racing machine construction.

CHAPTER XIV

END OF THE CENTURY SHIPS AND SAILORS

The Development of Iron and Steel—Modern Shipbuilders—
The Future—Present-Day Seamen—Conclusion

WITHIN the last two or three years, the *Hector*, the *Resistance*, the *Warrior*, and the *Canada*, types of our earliest ironclads, have been towed to a last resting-place in “Rotten Row,” and now lie hulks at moorings where less than a generation ago lay three-deckers, whose timbers yet litter the yards of the shipbreakers; and within sight of these ironclad hulks, the *Trafalgar* of 1806, disguised as the *Pitt*, still floats, a coal hulk, while the *Victoria and Albert* of 1899 is lying alongside the third George’s yacht, the old sailing-ship *Royal George*. These, and other hulks still afloat, were ships before the iron age was thought of, and it is quite possible they will still be floating when the last of our ironclads has become a hulk, supplanted by the modern steel war-vessel.

Sir William White, K.C.B., F.R.S., who was born at Devonport, and served in the dockyard there as a shipwright’s apprentice, has only this year retired from the position of Director of Naval Construction. He designed our first ironclads and our most recent battleships. In

the period 1883-85 he temporarily left the Admiralty and joined the Elswick Works ; but when the Government awoke to its duty and began the construction of the new fleet, Sir William White was recalled to the Queen's service, and, in about a dozen years, he built nearly £50,000,000 worth of war vessels.

As a material for shipbuilding, iron had been experimented with long before the century opened. But the thing was preposterous. For any sane man to go afloat in an iron vessel was to fly in the face of nature. This was said by a leading naval architect of a period well within this century, and in this sentence he expressed the world's opinion of the proposition.

I have some particulars of a proposal, made as early as 1809, not only to build iron ships, but to rig them with iron masts and yards and chain rigging ; the *Vulcan*, a small iron steamer, was running on the Clyde nine years later, but it was not until 1821, when the *Aaron Manby* crossed the channel, that iron shipbuilding was fairly started.

The introduction of the screw propeller gave an impetus to the use of new material, for the screw demanded greater length of hulls and greater strength and lightness of construction. Before another decade, Ditchburn and Mare on the Thames (how many people will recognise in the names the present great Thames Iron Works and Shipbuilding Company !), the Lairds of Birkenhead, the Napiers on the Clyde, and others began building iron vessels. The scarcity of timber and the growing cheapness of iron, the constant danger of fire in wooden steamers, all appealed to the minds of naval architects open to conviction, and, in a very few years, iron had practically superseded

wood as a material for shipbuilding, though not for war-vessels, for it was some years later before the Admiralty paid serious attention to the change.

Before, however, iron became general, a compromise was tried. This was the composite ship. Jordan and Getty, of Liverpool, built a schooner on this principle in 1850, and in February of the following year they launched the barque *Marion Macintyre*, for Macintyre & Co. of Liverpool. The merit of the invention, as set forth by Mr John Jordan, junior, who claimed to be the inventor, lay in the fact that a composite ship possessed a perfect and rigid iron frame, completely independent of the material with which it was covered, be that material wood or any other ; and in the disposition and arrangement of the principal timbers and planking, whereby secure and perfect joinings of wood with wood, and iron with iron, were formed throughout the structure.

Such method of construction was also much cheaper than in the case of either wood or iron ships, and the wooden bottom, in the still existing difficulty of fouling, was, of course, an advantage, since the wooden outer skin could be covered with copper. Without going into further technicalities of construction, it is fair to mention that Mr Jordan foresaw one of the serious objections to composite shipbuilding. Galvanic action was set up whenever iron came into contact with copper. Jordan, to prevent this, between the iron frame and wood sheathing, laid a lining of gutta percha, but this was not altogether successful, and the composite ship never became popular in the merchant service. In the Royal Navy, however, the composite vessel has lasted till the present day, being useful for surveying

purposes on foreign stations, where scraping a reef and tearing off plates would be awkward to repair, but a started plank comparatively easy. The fact, too, has always to be remembered that an iron or steel steamer should be docked, at least, once in six months—for the perfect anti-fouling paint has yet to be invented, useful as are those now employed. The composite ship, with her coppered bottom, where dry docks are not handy and when vessels are long in commission, is therefore commonly employed by the Admiralty for surveying service in distant parts of the world.

The *Great Britain*, in 1845, was the first iron steamer to cross the Atlantic, and the *Adriatic*, of the Collins line, was the last wooden steamer built for this service. She was running from 1857 to 1861, when she was sold for a hulk. The first iron Cunarder was the *Persia*, and the last of the iron paddle-boats the *Scotia*; the last of the wooden steamers the *Arabia*. Their dates are all between the fifties and sixties, but the *Scotia* continued running until the later seventies, when she was sold to a telegraph cable company. In the later fifties came that sensational blunder, the often described *Great Eastern*.

The *Great Eastern* was designed by Isambard Brunel (son of the inventor of the block-making machine), and laid down in Scott, Russell & Co.'s yard at Millwall on May 1, 1854. She was at first called the *Leviathan*, and was built to the order of the Eastern Steam Navigation Company for the Indian and Australian trade. Her propelling powers were six masts for sails, and screw and paddle engines. This combination, it was supposed, would work wonders, but it proved totally inadequate to her size. The Thames at

Milwall not being wide enough to launch her end on—she was 691 ft. long, and 83 ft. wide—she was built broadside on to the water, on a floor, inclined one in twelve, down which she was to be pushed a distance of 260 ft. by hydraulic rams along the broadside. The launch, attempted in November 1857, was a failure; some of the workmen were killed in the operation, and the ship was not got afloat until January 1858. She had cost, so far, with hull and engines, about £700,000, and the original Company was glad to sell her, within twelve months of her launch, for £160,000. Her engines, the paddles of 1200 horse power, and the screw of 1600 horse power, though inadequate to her burden of 22,500 tons, were more than enough to move all the cargoes and passengers she could obtain. No port in the world could at that time, within any convenient period, collect cargoes enough for such a vessel, and her many misfortunes made passengers nervous of travelling in her. Her double shell of two skins of half-an-inch thick iron, though making her safer than many of her contemporaries, caused her, in conjunction with her rounded canoe-like bottom, to roll horribly, and in spite of her great height out of water, she shipped green seas, even in moderate gales.

On her trial trip an explosion of steam occurred, by which ten firemen were killed and several others injured, and from this time her career was a series of misfortunes. Her designer took her failure so much to heart that he died of grief soon after her trial trip. In 1864, after unsuccessful voyages to India, to Australia, and across the Atlantic, she began laying Atlantic telegraph cable, the most useful and only successful work done by her. Then she was laid up on the Clyde, and,

in 1888, was sold for old metal for about £16,000. In August of that year she was towed from the Clyde to the Mersey, and beached on the Cheshire shore, and the ship breakers, before the year was ended, had entirely broken her up. Brunel, so far as the size of his ship was concerned, was about half a century ahead in his ideas. The *Oceanic*, launched in 1899, exceeds the *Great Eastern* in length by a few feet, but is much narrower in beam, while in speed the new steamer is twice as fast as the old one.

One may roughly describe the process of iron ship-building as in the experimental stage in the twenties, begun in the thirties, progressing slowly till the fifties, and rapidly in the sixties and seventies; its progress slackening by the growing use of steel in the eighties, and now practically superseded by the last-named material.

In 1875 the Admiralty was paying £20 a ton for iron plates for shipbuilding, and in that year no steel vessels were building in the United Kingdom—although 6 steamers, 200 wooden sailing ships, 125 iron steamers, and 115 iron sailing ships were on the stocks. Twenty years later the only wooden vessels building were small coasters; the only iron vessels, 27 steamers and 1 sailing ship; while 282 steamers and 23 sailing ships of steel were on the stocks. At the end of 1899, in all the big shipbuilding yards, steel had practically superseded iron, while the cost of steel plates was about half that of iron.

Building in private yards or in Government dock-yards does not now differ materially, except that in the Government dockyards much of the material used has to be fashioned by contract elsewhere, whereas in many of the private yards nearly every one of the details

of the work can be done on the spot ; nor is there much difference in the cost to the public of the work done in private or royal yards. The cost for the most recent types of vessels of a first-class battleship in a Government yard is about £66 per ton, the tonnage is about 12,950 tons, so that the price is roughly £861,284 ; a similar vessel built in a private yard would cost about £64 a ton. A third-class cruiser built in a royal yard costs about £147,899, or £67 per ton, her tonnage being about 2135 tons ; in a private yard the cost is about £64 per ton. These figures are for ships complete in every detail except armament.

Besides being cheaper, a steel ship can be built of equal strength, while fifteen per cent. lighter in weight of metal than an iron ship. In the mercantile service it is usual to make some parts of the structure of steel vessels of iron those parts being where the surface is most exposed to corrosion, viz., underneath the engines and boilers, the exposed weather decks, inside the bunkers, etc. But in war-vessels iron has practically become extinct. The great increase in the size of vessels in the last year or two is very marked ; this increase still goes on, and no modern constructor will undertake to say what will be the maximum, or when that maximum will be reached. The largest cargo steamers are principally built for the Transatlantic service, for carrying cotton, grain, and cattle. It is quite usual for them to return in ballast when suitable cargo is not available, so that economy in working has to be greatly studied ; with a very slight increase in crew it is possible to work a very large increase in tonnage, hence the popularity with shipowners of big cargo steamers.

There is an agitation now going on in Parliament in regard to the necessity for legislation on the matter of ballasting these large vessels. The question has arisen within the last few years, and is a direct consequence of the substitution of steel for iron, and the introduction of the present large, flat-bottomed, broad-beamed vessels, with a flat keel in place of the projecting bar-keel, common fifteen years ago. The bar-keel projected considerably below the bottom plate of the ship, and as ships became larger, drawing more water, to lessen their draught this was abandoned. The question of draught is, of course, of major importance in the designing of the cargo steamer. The narrow-beamed, unstable, dangerous type of ships, usually built from fifteen to twenty years ago, was based upon the, now admitted, fallacy that narrowness of beam was an important factor in the speed of a vessel, whereas length is really the main consideration. This change of opinion has led to a reaction, and many present-day steamers have an excessively broad beam. These changes have necessitated a modification of the old plan of carrying all water ballast in a double bottom, and the fitting of additional spaces for carrying ballast at a higher level, so as not to make the vessel too stiff. The Board of Trade permits the double bottom to be excluded from tonnage measurement, thereby giving the shipowner more space to carry his cargo, and on the same principle, other spaces, if used exclusively for carrying water ballast, should be excluded, but the Board declines to recognise this, and the shipowner who provides a large water ballast capacity suffers for doing so. From this has arisen the unsatisfactory practice of arranging these ballast compartments, so that they can also be

used for carrying cargo. This has led to the desire for legislation. But shipowners and shipbuilders both recognise the difficulty, and if left to themselves would probably soon devise a means to overcome it.

The Admiralty constructors lay down the plans for warships, and Lloyd's rules regulate, with very few exceptions, the building of merchant ships. Lloyd's surveys and classes most British ships, therefore owners and shipbuilders design vessels to meet Lloyd's requirements. Building begins with the "constructional drawings," and from these main plans, plans of all the various parts are laid off in the mould lofts. The keel is laid, often now, in the case of a big warship, in a graving dock, so that when completed she can be floated out, and the delicate operation of launching avoided. To the keel are riveted the angle-irons forming the frame; the ribs while at a white heat are then bent to the exact curves required, this part of the work being a distinct branch of the shipbuilders' business, just as the rolling of the steel plates is another; the plates for the cellular double bottoms are laid, then follow the deck-laying and the skin or outer plating; the armour, if a war vessel, and the upper works. The whole preparation of the material is the work of the forge, or the lathe, or the steel plane, or of some similar tool belonging to the blacksmiths' department, the blacksmithing being on the scale that uses a steel hammer of ninety tons force on the anvils. The work of putting the materials together is done by riveters—the shipwrights are riveters, and their assistants are riveters' labourers—and riveting by hand or by machine-driven riveters, using electricity, seems, to the uninitiated onlooker, the sole operation involved in putting the ships together.

In the modern shipbuilding yard the adze is almost an unused tool, and chips of wood are rarely seen. The agreeable odours of newly cut timber, and the wholesome smell of boiling pitch, have been replaced by stifling fumes of sulphur and the gases of molten metal; in place of the music of caulkers' and shipwrights' mallets, the noises of the yard are now combined in one hideous clangour—the din of the boilermaker; the dust of the casting boxes is now the litter of the shops; the steel shaving from a steel-driven planing machine the least ugly object in the factory.

With the expiring century the wood-worker, cunning to see *shakes* or *rends*, and learned upon *cups* that would split planks when trenails came to be driven, is dying; and the sail-loft, where workers with palm and needle and fid plied their trade, making single sails with a thousand yards of canvas in them, will soon be a curiosity.

What a chapter in the history of the sea is written in the office ledgers of the great shipbuilding yards! In most of them are entries beginning sixty or seventy years ago, when the launch of a 500-ton wooden sailing ship was the event of a year, and its successful accomplishment good reason for rejoicing. The names of some of the great builders are as familiar to the British public as are the names of many statesmen, and the services of the builders have been quite as important in the furtherance of their country's prosperity. Some materials for the story of iron and steel shipbuilding, and of the builders who have become great during the Victorian era, have been very kindly given to me at first hand by firms whose names are famous throughout the shipping world. Such short summary of this material

as the limits of this book allows does but poor justice to the importance of the subject.

By the graceful lines of their hulls and the smart passages of clippers, by the rapid steaming and beauty of the great ocean liners, Clyde-built vessels, for the last half century, have given in seaports, the world over, bold advertisement to Scotch shipbuilders.

The Dennys of Dumbarton is essentially a historic shipbuilding firm. Nearly seventy years ago William Denny, the founder, built the *Rob Roy* and the *Marjory*, pioneer steamers on the Clyde, launching the little vessels from a small yard on the east bank of the Leven. William Denny died in 1833, leaving seven sons, and three of them, William, Alexander, and Peter, continued the business. In 1844 they began building iron vessels ; in 1851 Dr Peter Denny, the sole survivor, entered into partnership with Messrs Tullock and M'Ausland, marine engineers of Dumbarton, and in 1871 Mr Walter Brock joined the partnership, and these gentlemen and their sons brought the firm to its present high position. In 1867, owing to the growth of trade, the Leven shipyard was removed to the opposite bank of the river, where it now occupies 40 acres in workshops and docks. The Dennys are famous for their experimental tank, 300 ft. long by 10 ft. deep, in which, with models cut from paraffin wax, by ingenious methods devised by the late Mr Froude of Torquay, various designs of ships are experimented with. The only other tank of its kind is near Portsmouth Dockyard, and the Dennys' fame for beauty of lines, and great speed in their ships, is largely attributed to their careful experiments with what many people at first looked upon as an expensive toy. The Dennys employ about 3000 workmen. They have a

direct interest in a steel works at Dumbarton, which enables them to be almost independent of outside work, and their present yearly output is about 36,000 tons. Since 1844 they have launched about 633 vessels of all classes, from shallow draught river and channel steamers, and stern wheelers of large size, drawing only 15 in., to Atlantic greyhounds of 18,000 tons register, and 22-knot Irish Channel passenger steamers.

Robert Napier began life in a blacksmith's shop in Glasgow in 1815 ; eight years later he built his first engine, which for many years propelled a Clyde ferry steamer. The blacksmith's shop soon became a marine engineering establishment ; then, in 1839, Napier was entrusted with the important undertaking of supplying the engines for the *British Queen*, the first of the Cunarders ; and, soon after, four other steamers for the same company. He engined the *Duke of Wellington*, the pride of the English navy forty years ago, and he built the *Black Prince*, the second of the four first iron-clads. The name of Robert Napier can be seen now on brass plates on ships in every seaport in the world.

John Elder served his apprenticeship with Napier ; then, in 1852, he joined the firm of Randolph, Elliot & Company, constructing the first compound engine (his invention) for a screw steamer, the *Brandon*, in 1854, and, in 1868, he became the owner of the Fairfield Shipbuilding Company. Sir William Pearce, in conjunction with the heirs of John Elder, in 1870, joined the Fairfield Works, and became sole partner eight years later. Since then Fairfield has turned out more than £7,000,000 worth of shipping, among them some of the most celebrated ocean liners.

The firm of Harland & Wolff of Belfast, less than

fifty years ago, proudly launched an occasional steamer ; and this shipyard was then just beginning to call attention to itself, surprising the Clyde shipbuilders, who thought serious competition in Belfast was not to be feared. Something like 8000 men are now employed by Harland & Wolff, and the Belfast shipbuilders, in the middle of 1899, had, at one time, upon the stocks or under repair, ten of the largest ships in the world, representing 100,000 tons. The *Oceanic*, the largest British steamer afloat, was launched from Harland & Wolff's yard in 1899.

The history of the Lairds of Birkenhead is practically the history of steamships. William Laird, grandfather of the present senior partner, was one of the promoters of the St George Steam Packet Company, running between Glasgow and Liverpool ; later on, Mr Laird provided a steamer service between the principal ports of Scotland and Ireland, and in 1824 he founded a shipbuilding firm, the celebrated *Sirius* being one of the first vessels built in the yard. In 1829, John Laird, son of the founder of the Birkenhead Iron Works, began building in iron, and this Laird, from that time, became an ardent believer in the new material, in which belief he was actively supported by his brother, Macgregor Laird, who, in 1831, took the iron steamer *Alburka* up the Niger, and he was the first master to make an ocean voyage in an iron vessel. The Lairds, from then on, built dozens of vessels whose names became famous in the annals of shipping—among the earliest the *Robert F. Stockton* is perhaps the best remembered. By the later thirties, the Lairds were building ships for the East India Company, and the names of the armed flotilla constructed in 1839 for service on the Tigris and Euphrates—

the *Nimrod*, *Nitocris*, and *Assyria*, and later, the *Nemesis* and *Phlegethon*—can be found in English history. These were the first war-vessels built at the yard. In the same year came the first order from the Admiralty; and the *Dover* for the Government Mail Packet Service, launched in 1840, was probably the first iron vessel built for the Admiralty. Three gun-boats were ordered in the next year—the *Soudan*, *Albert*, and *Wilberforce*—for service on the Niger, and shortly afterwards came the first foreign order, the *Guadaloupe*, an iron paddle-wheel war-vessel of 800 tons burden for the Mexican Government. In 1842, the *Nun*, an iron ferry steamer built by the Lairds, grounded on the stone pier at Birkenhead, her stern resting on the pier and her bows on a rock, leaving a hollow space between the two points of eighty-one feet. The whole of this intervening space, in which her sixty-five tons weight of machinery was situated, was unsupported, yet she floated off next tide uninjured. This was a triumphant demonstration of the strength of iron vessels that went far to encourage faith in them, and orders came freely to the yard. On the outbreak of the Crimean war, the Lairds were in great request, and they were equal to all demands, completing within eight months 29 vessels, chiefly gunboats and light draft mortar vessels; one of these, the *Cupid*, of 102 tons burden, and of iron, was begun and launched within three weeks. Then came orders from the Admiralty, from private shipowners, and from foreign governments: Vanderbilt's 17-knot steam-yacht *Valiant*; the Irish Channel steamers, *Ulster*, *Munster*, and *Connaught*; the British ironclads, *Captain*, *Agincourt*, *Vanguard*; the foreign war-vessels, *Huascar*, *Almirante Landell*, *Almirante Lynch*; and famous ocean liners too numerous to

mention ; and more famous than all, the Confederate cruiser *Alabama*, which was launched from the yard in August 1862. In modern times the Lairds have built every kind of war-vessel, from the 27-knot torpedo-destroyers of 1893 to the up-to-date 33-knot type ; and the *Royal Oak* and the *Glory*, 14,000 tons displacement, battleships. The present members of the firm are the direct descendants of the original brothers Laird, in the fourth generation. Up to the last quarter of the year 1899, Laird's yard had built about 467,000 tons of shipping, employing constantly about 3000 men and occasionally as many as 5000. Their 20 acres of works include five graving docks and four building slips. From the first iron vessel built in 1829 to the present, about 650 iron and steel ships have been launched, with machinery equal to 640,000 horse power ; and for the half century the firm have been contractors to the Admiralty, they have launched 80 vessels for the Royal Navy, and more than a score for foreign governments.

William Armstrong, founder of the Elswick Works of Armstrong, Whitworth & Company, on the Tyne, was born in 1810 ; while articled to an attorney he made a hobby of electricity, thinking out several important inventions. Then he turned his attention to hydraulics—the hydraulic crane and a great many other applications of hydraulic power were devised by him. In the middle of the century, a small works was established at Elswick to make Armstrong's patents, and, in 1854, he built the rifled gun that bears his name. Patent after patent was taken out by the firm, until the works grew in extent and importance, and now this shipyard, forging its own steel, making its own tools and materials, turns out

warships complete, from the operation of laying the keel plates to furnishing the armament.

From that famous firm of shipbuilders, Palmers, Jarrow, whose rolling mills, blast furnaces, and building slips extend for a mile and a half along the Tyne bank, I have received an interesting document which illustrates, without further comment, the change from iron to steel, and the increase of size in the steamers.

Approximate mercantile tonnage launched at Jarrow :—

Date.	Number of Ships.	Total Gross Tonnage.	Average Tonnage per Ship.
1852 to 1860	88	50,000	560
1861 „ 1870	157	155,000	925
1871 „ 1880	124	206,000	1660
1881 „ 1890	200	414,000	2070
1891 „ 1898	65	226,000	3500

Before 1883 all the ships were of iron ; after 1885 all the ships were of steel.

The firm have built every kind of war-vessel, from the floating battery *Terror*, launched in 1856, to the modern battleship *Resolution* of 1891 ; from the old-fashioned cruiser *Defence* of 1860, to three 30-knot torpedo boat destroyers in 1899.

Barrow-in-Furness, down almost to the fifties, had a population of about three hundred and fifty persons, though the veins of pure haematite iron in the district have been worked for a hundred years. Then railways opened up the country, and from an export of 1000 tons yearly of iron-ore, the figures rose, until now the great Bessemer Steel Works annually use hundreds of thousands of tons. On a group of islands situated off the Peninsula of Furness are the great Naval Construction Works of

Vickers Sons and Maxim. In July 1899, from this yard was launched the *Vengeance*, the first battleship built by the firm, though not by any means the first big warship, for the *Powerful*, one of the two largest and fastest cruisers afloat, was handed over by these builders to the Admiralty within twenty-nine months of her keel being laid. This company builds every kind of ship afloat, and employs 14,000 men, whose wages' bill amounts to £1,000,000 sterling a year—nearly half that sum is represented by the wages of what was fifty years ago the hamlet of Barrow. The *Vengeance* was completed in every detail, from her keel-plates to her armament, a broadside of four 50-ton guns, of six 6-inch quick-firers, of six 12-pound guns, and of six Maxims : the whole representing a fire, if concentrated, of 11,000 pounds of metal, with a collective energy at the muzzle of 600,000 foot tons. Twenty such ships could fire, every five minutes, a weight of metal equal to 190 tons. The Company has now under construction about 70,000 tons of armoured warships for our own and foreign governments, and has gun and armour contracts for nearly every government in the world.

From the comparatively small shipbuilding firm of Charles and William Earle, Earle's Shipbuilding and Engineering Company, Limited, Hull, has grown up within the last eight-and-twenty years. The present premises occupy about thirty acres, with a fine frontage to the Humber, where it is three miles in width. At this yard some five hundred high-class men-of-war and merchant ships have been built, including cruisers, gunboats, torpedo boat destroyers, and royal yachts, for our own or foreign navies. The firm, of which Mr A. E. Seaton is the managing director, employs about four

thousand men, and such well-known English cruisers as the *Endymion* and the *St George* were launched from Earle's, who have also supplied many of our warships, built elsewhere, with machinery. During 1898 their output equalled about eighteen thousand tons, and they built machinery equal to 48,550 horse power. In 1899 they launched H.M. ships *Perseus* and *Prometheus*, and the torpedo boat destroyers *Bullfinch* and *Dove*.

Messrs Ditchburn & Mare began iron shipbuilding at Blackwall in the forties—the royal yacht *Fairy*, as I have elsewhere stated, was launched by them in 1845. In a description of Blackwall, published three years before Ditchburn launched the *Fairy*, it is stated that : "Blackwall is celebrated for its sumptuous whitebait dinners, and Lovegrove's West India Dock Tavern is much resorted to during the season by private parties, corporate bodies from the City, and occasionally by Cabinet Ministers, for the sake of the peculiar delicacies there provided." When Cabinet Ministers go to Blackwall now, their visit is more often connected with the launching of battleships than with dining on whitebait ; for the firm of Ditchburn & Mare has grown into the Thames Iron Works Shipbuilding and Engineering Company, occupying 34 acres on the banks of the river, and employing 3000 workmen. In the last quarter of 1899, besides a great number of small vessels, the Company were building four first-class battleships, three for the British, and one for the Japanese Governments. The firm has recently taken over the engineering works of John Penn & Sons, and besides its shipbuilding, carries on boiler-making, marine and electrical engineering, and in addition to these departments it has a civil engineers' branch, which has constructed some of the

most important engineering works in the world. The firm has built warships and merchant vessels of every type ; from the *Warrior*, our first sea-going ironclad, to the modern 14,000-ton battleship *Albion* ; from 18-knot mail-steamers to steam lifeboats. One remarkable vessel by this Company was the *Cleopatra*, which conveyed the celebrated obelisk from Alexandria to the Thames Embankment.

The firm of John L. Thorneycroft & Co. of Chiswick, on the Thames, consists of two partners, both of whom are distinguished in the scientific world : Mr John Donaldson, as chief of the Ordnance Department at Dum Dum in India, and Mr John Thorneycroft, of whom the late chief constructor of the navy, Sir Nathaniel Barnaby, said : "Out of the four great steps in speed-making which will make the last quarter of the century illustrious, Mr Thorneycroft must be credited with three. Mr Thorneycroft in his several successes has given us a new form of boat, a new system of construction, a new form of propeller, and an effective way of generating steam by methods which had often been tried unsuccessfully, and abandoned." The Thorneycroft water tube boilers are now well known the world over, but the firm is no less famous for other engineering patents, and as builders of small fast steamers, torpedo boats, and similar vessels for our own and foreign governments.

Yarrow & Co., Limited, is a type of the firms that have grown from the specialisation of modern shipbuilding. The Company have constructed craft for nearly every government in the world, their specialty being torpedo boats and torpedo boat destroyers, steam launches and light draft steamers, such as the

stern wheelers so famous on African rivers, and well remembered in connection with military operations on the Nile. They have built light stern wheelers so large that they might be classed as regular channel steamers, yet drawing no more than sixteen inches ; and they have recently completed a number of torpedo boat destroyers with a speed of 32 knots. The works are at Poplar, and employ about 1000 men.

There are at least half a dozen other first-class shipbuilding firms, such as Messrs J. & G. Thomson, and the London and Glasgow Shipbuilding Company of the Clyde ; Hawthorn, Leslie, & Co. of Newcastle-on-Tyne ; Doxford & Sons of Sunderland, and others, who are continually building war-vessels and merchant steamers of the largest size.

To the skill and enterprise of these shipbuilders the people of Great Britain owe a big debt of gratitude ; for whatever has been done by the commercial instincts of shipowners and the seaman-like qualities of our sailors to establish our sea supremacy, the British shipbuilder has been more than equal to the occasion. He has risked enormous capital in experimentalising ; he has never for a moment allowed the question of profitable building to be anything but secondary to his reputation for good honest workmanship, and to-day he has the whole world for his customer.

Meanwhile Germany has become such a formidable competitor that the well-known Vulcan Works of Stettin have, at time of writing, the honour of being the builders of the fastest Atlantic steamer—the Nord-deutscher Lloyd Company's *Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse*, of 14,349 tons and a sea speed of 24 knots. From having

most of their ships built in England in the seventies, the Germans, now, not only build their own vessels, but are obtaining many foreign orders ; from 147 merchant steamers in 1871, the German mercantile steam fleet, in 1898, had grown to the number of 1171 steamers, and the difference in the tonnage had become from, in 1871, 82,000, in 1897, 967,000 tons. He would be a rash prophet who would predict how much or how little within the next quarter of a century Germany will have affected our shipbuilding trade ; the last quarter of a century's lesson in other branches of national industry is, however, apparent to all but those who cannot, or who will not, see.

He would be a rash prophet, too, who would predict at what points the yearly increase in speed and in size of ships will have reached their limits. There are three factors, now in the experimental stage, and the practical utilisation of any one of these is as fraught with possibilities as those that came from the perfection of the screw propeller ; the successful application of all three, or even of two, it is safe to say, will make the present-day steamer as antiquated a vehicle of sea travelling as is the present-day sailing ship.

The three factors are the use of aluminium in place of steel in shipbuilding ; of petroleum for fuel ; of the turbine propeller. The turbine system of propulsion is already more than an experiment ; the cheapening of petroleum fuel is practically the only bar to the substitution for coal fuel ; aluminium is one-third the weight of steel, and when an inventor succeeds in giving it, by an alloy, the strength of steel, a saving of half the weight will have been effected in shipbuilding material. This reduction of weight, and the displacement of coal, are all

that is needed to break down the present limit to the size and speed of steamers.

It is pretty generally agreed that the present method of manning the Royal Navy is about as perfect as it could well be. The *Britannia* training school for cadets, and the Royal Naval Engineers College at Keyham, are perfect institutions for training young officers. The system of training seamen, catching them young, and breeding them up to the ways of the service on board training ships, is excellent, and lovers of the service, anxious to see it above reproach, have only one serious fault to find with the present routine. Men having been well trained, and having acquired a fair knowledge of gunnery, are, in due course, sent to foreign stations, where they are chiefly employed, year in, year out, in painting and cleaning their ships, the least possible time allowed by the Admiralty regulations being devoted to drill. As a consequence of this, the best rifle team in a fleet on a foreign station very often figures lowest in a rifle shooting match, and British seamen and marines landed at foreign and colonial ports too often suffer badly by comparison with foreigners, and even with local volunteer forces. Many officers know this and lament it, but, as they say, their men can beat the world at painting and brass polishing! This weakness is, for obvious reasons, not so apparent on the Mediterranean and Home stations, and it ought still less to be seen further away.

From the merchant service, there being no longer need for skilled seamen, the sailor, as a sailor, is rapidly disappearing. The few British seamen still afloat are, as a rule, shamefully lodged and fed, and, as a

consequence, those men who are worth anything either desert, or soon get employment in the better class of steamship lines, there to forget their sailor-knowledge and become what are now significantly known as "deck hands"—an apt description of the unskilled labourers now usually carried on steamers.

Parents still pay premiums to shipowners for sending their sons to sea to become officers in the merchant service. The indentures of these lads set forth that the boys are to be taught the business of the sea in return for the premium paid. The shipowners who honestly carry out their part of the contract are so few, that most people who know the merchant service well could name them off-hand. The business, like that of paying for young men to obtain colonial experience, is, in short, too often a swindle; yet it flourishes in the face of frequent exposure. The late Thomas Gray, C.B., Assistant Secretary of the Board of Trade, did his best, in a little book published some years ago, called *Under the Red Ensign*, to warn parents against the absurdity of paying large sums of money to shipowners, who, in return for the premiums, employ educated boys of gentle breeding, in cleaning pigsties; lodge and feed them worse than pauper cabin boys; work them day and night beyond their strength; and at the end of four years' service—supposing, as is too frequently the case, they have not, meanwhile, deserted—turn them adrift so ignorant of their trade that those who become officers almost invariably are compelled to go to sea before the mast to learn seamanship, and to spend weeks on shore at school, learning even the small amount of navigation

required to enable them to pass the Board of Trade for second mates' certificates.

The navigation laws, founded, it is said, by Richard I., imposing certain wise and unwise restrictions upon merchant shipping, became clearly established in the reign of Charles II. as an Act, among others of similar import, restricting the carrying of goods to English ships, of which the master and three-fourths of the crew were to be English. These, and similar laws, were consolidated in 1833, and in the whole or part repealed by the Act of 1849, which was passed, as its preamble set forth, "For the Encouragement of British Shipping and Navigation."

Logic and figures prove that, since 1849, we have made such strides, as carriers, as more than justifies the wisdom of the legislature. But no amount of political sophistry can alter the fact that the British merchant seaman is fast disappearing, and that the ships of the greatest maritime nation in the world are largely manned by foreigners. And a further unpleasant truth is the wholesale desertion of seamen from our ships in all parts of the world.

A British Board of Trade report, presented to the House of Commons in 1899, containing information from our consuls at the principal American, French, and other ports, and from all the colonial governments, endeavours to supply information on the subject. The primary cause of desertion in America is said to be the boarding-master and his crimps, together with the higher rate of wages ruling. Drink is assigned as the principal cause at Marseilles. At the port of Melbourne, in addition to high wages, the Local Department of Trade states that the poor and insufficient

food supplied on British sailing ships is the cause of 258 cases of desertion, 132 of them British seamen, down to the year ending June 30, 1898. This is only half the truth. The real trouble, as is known to every merchant sailor, comes of insufficient food, atrocious lodging, and deliberate intent on the part of many shipmasters, who make it a regular practice, to over-work and generally ill-treat their men during the voyage, thus driving them to desert at the first port of arrival, leaving their accrued wages to go to the profits of the voyage, and saving the cost to the ship of the maintenance of a crew while she is lying in harbour waiting cargo.

In 1849, when the Navigation Laws were repealed, the shipping in our home and foreign trade, exclusive of river steamers and similar vessels, amounted in tonnage to a little more than three millions, and in number of ships to 18,221; in a dozen years the number of ships had increased by 2000, and the tonnage by 1,000,000; in 1871 there were 22,207 ships, and the tonnage of them exceeded 5,500,000; and now the British Empire, owning more than half the tonnage of the world, owns 11,000 ships, of a total registered tonnage of more than 13,500,000. In 1800 our tonnage amounted to 1,855,879, and our colonies have since then so grown, that the Australian group alone, which, in 1822, owned only 163 tons of shipping, now owns more than 500,000.

These figures are flattering to the national pride; but not so the statistics relating to our seamen. In 1800 the 138,271 men who manned our merchant ships could and did fight their country's battles; not five per cent. of our merchant seamen to-day are of the

least use, beyond the value of unskilled labour, as crews for our war-vessels.

The number of officers, seamen, and marines provided for in the estimates of 1898-99 was 106,390, of whom 18,000 were marines and 4200 coastguard. The strength of our naval reserve of merchant seamen is about 27,000. In ten years we have increased the complement of the Royal Navy to 40,000 men, and in the same period we have added only 8000 men to the reserve. Strong in men as the navy is, every man will be needed to man our fleet whenever we engage in naval war, and the most sanguine believer in our prowess cannot but have misgivings of what will happen when the inevitable chances of war compel us to call for reserves to replace casualties.

The skilled men-o'-warsmen of to-day differ from the men of the wooden age, no less than the ships differ; the seamen-gunners of the modern fleet have only become highly trained by many months of careful work; and the fishermen and coasting seamen, who form such a large portion of our small reserve, are a long way behind efficiency in this respect. At the beginning of the century these men, who more than any others fought our battles, learnt their business in a week. The cutlass exercise, and the working of a 32-pounder, were then the only arts of war; at sail trimming, then the chief duty of the sailor, they were in their element.

English merchant seamen have been mostly driven out by Scandinavians, who are just as good sailors, and are more sober, obedient, and respectable than the average present-day forecastle Englishmen. And

for these reasons, when shipowners and politicians assert that the foreigner is inevitable, it is very difficult to contradict the assertion. A weak attempt has been made recently in the House of Commons, at the expense of the shipowner, to improve matters. This was in the direction of a suggestion to encourage shipowners to carry British seamen, by excusing the owners some portion of the light dues—a tax upon shipping that ought long ago to have been charged against the public revenue. But not this way lies the remedy.

In the great steamship lines belonging to France and Germany, nearly every seaman on board is a trained man-o'-warsman, and the companies are heavily subsidised. In our own great companies, a subsidy, barely sufficient to pay for the added expense involved in carrying mails and keeping up to time, holding ships at the disposal of the Government, and many other conditions, is granted. But in our steamers it is the exception, rather than the rule, to see the blue ensign at the peak, denoting that ten per cent. of the crew are naval reserve men, and one of our largest companies is chiefly manned by lascars. In the great steamers of at least two first-class foreign powers, the whole two hundred or more of each ship's crew will, oftener than not, be found to be trained men-o'-warsmen. There is only one way to alter this, which is to recognise that if a naval reserve is needed, it must be paid for; that steamship companies must be liberally subsidised, and in return for the money, their ships must be compelled to carry thoroughly well-drilled crews of naval reserve men.

Here ends my attempt to sketch the changes of a century. The enormous increase in our floating wealth

has, of course, brought enormously increased anxiety and responsibility for its protection. The wooden walls that were our bulwarks, and the race of seamen in whom we put our trust, have gone for ever; there are those who think that the new order of steam and steel, and seamen-gunners, and stokers, has so levelled the nations as to threaten our empire of the sea. To those who have such misgivings, it is solid comfort to remember that the ocean is still, as when Shakespeare wrote, our natural ally, and "Britain is a world by itself."

"The natural bravery of our isle which stands,
As Neptune's park, ribbed and paled in
With rocks unscaleable, and roaring waters ;
With sands that will not bear your enemies' boats,
But suck them up to the topmast. A kind of conquest
Cæsar made here, but made not here his brag
Of "Came," "Saw," and "Overcame" with shame ;
(The first that ever touched him) he was carried
From our coast twice beaten ; and his shipping
(Poor ignorant baubles !) on our terrible seas,
Like egg-shells moved upon their surges, cracked
As easily 'gainst our rocks."

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